University of Alberta

The Role of Music in Kindergarten and its Contribution to the Lived Experience in the Classroom.

By

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the integrative use of music contributed to the quality of the kindergarten program. It portrays the case studies of two generalist kindergarten teachers who integrate music throughout their kindergarten day. The focus of the study was to seek an understanding as to when, how, and why music is used in kindergarten, as well as the students' reactions to music in the life experience of the classroom.

This study includes a description of a typical day in each of the two kindergarten classrooms. A detailed account of each teacher's background, past experiences and beliefs about music in kindergarten provides the reader with an understanding of why these two teachers do what they do. This study brings forth the voices of kindergarten students. Through informal conversations, students had the opportunity to reveal their thoughts about music in their kindergarten class.

Through analysis of interviews, observational data, and informal conversations, it is shown that the integrative use of music enhances learning, classroom atmosphere and the general lived experience of both teachers and students. The integrative use of music also enriches the relationships between teacher and students and amongst the students themselves which in turn, contributes to the development of a caring community of learners.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Paulette Boyer, for instilling in me the love of music and for always believing in me.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

> I used to teach Kindergarten and I am not a music specialist. However I did do a lot of music in my class. I had songs for the days of the week, the months, the seasons, a song when cleaning up as well as a hello and goodbye song. Why did I instinctively think of doing those things?
>
> - Susan McLeod
> Personal correspondence

One of my classmates in my doctoral program made this statement during a class discussion. It caused me to reflect on my belief that music plays an important role in the kindergarten classroom. Her simple statement reinforced the importance of investigating further the value of music in kindergarten, its integration in the program, and generalist teachers' perspectives on this matter.

My interest in this study stems from my own experiences as a teacher. I came into a kindergarten teaching position after having taught choral music and French at a junior and senior high level. I undertook the challenge to teach in a different area, and at a level that was foreign to me. When I was given the opportunity to view another kindergarten class as part of my mentorship program, it surprised me to see how much music was used throughout the kindergarten day. Music was not only used to enhance classroom routines, it was also used as a tool for content teaching. The kindergarten teacher seemed at ease with her singing voice and comfortable singing in front of other adults in the room. I realized that there were many ways that teachers could use music

throughout a school day. I have now taught kindergarten for seven years. During this time, I have struggled with my own desires to improve my work as a teacher, and with the incongruencies between my personal philosophies on teaching and learning, and those of the school in which I teach.

Although music has been part of the Canadian education system since 1846, (Green and Vogan, 1991; Montgomery, 2000) there has been a constant struggle to have music accepted as an important subject in students' learning and their overall development. A number of research projects have shown the benefits of music in various aspects of a child's education. Gromko and Poorman (2000), Rauscher and Zupan (2000), Costa-Giomi, (1999) and Rauscher et al. (1997) have all demonstrated in their research a link between keyboard instruction and an increase in spatial-temporal cognition. Other research has also demonstrated the use of music enhancing language literacy skills (Fisher and McDonald 2001; Gambill, 2002; Reis, 2002). Goeghegan and Mitchelmore (1996) found an increase in mathematical achievement among kindergarten children who studied music. An experimental group of students participating in one 1-hour session per week for ten months in a music program based on Kodaly techniques, scored higher on math than a control group of children receiving no musical experience. Hanley and Montgomery (2002) explain that no attempts have been made to develop "research based, learner centered-curricula with greater decision given to teachers" (p. 119). According to Favaro (2000), "the past few decades have seen a profusion of research on the value of arts education in the schools, to such extent that we could probably fill a library on the topic [and] what has become obvious is that the research has not made a significant impact on curriculum, on teaching practice, or on administrative

decision making" (p.42). Music still does not occupy an important position in today's curriculum and has not attained the level of attention as the math, language arts, social studies and science subjects.

In Alberta, the music curriculum and the kindergarten curriculum represent two different educational philosophies on how music should be taught. Music goals and skills for the kindergarten level are included in the *Elementary Music Curriculum Guide 1989*, despite the statement that "the E.C.S. (Early Childhood Services) level is not a mandated program, [nor] is the inclusion of teaching ideas meant to imply that music should be taught as a separate subject in ECS" (Music Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. iv). On the other hand, the *Kindergarten Program Statement: Revised September 2000* includes a Venn diagram putting child development at the center, surrounded by six learning areas, one being "Creative and Cultural Expression." This supports the concept that "young children learn in an integrated way, and many of the learnings identified in this program statement will be accomplished simultaneously" (Kindergarten Program Statement, 2000, p.5). The music goals are listed in the "Creative and Cultural Expression" learning area and they are very similar to the general goals mentioned in the elementary music curriculum. Goals for specific skills such as singing, playing an instrument, reading, writing and creating music, that are included in the music curriculum guide, have been omitted in the kindergarten program statement. Is the new kindergarten curriculum then promoting the integration of music at the expense of eliminating music taught as a distinct subject? Equally, does this imply that kindergarten teachers need not consider any particular music outcomes when they include music in their program?

It is interesting to note that while kindergarten is not a mandated program in

Alberta, its program statement has already gone through two revisions since its inception in 1996 while the music program of study has not been updated in 16 years. The new *Kindergarten Program Statement: Revised September 2005* has now divided the "Creative and Cultural Expression" learning area into two: "Creative Expression" and "Citizenship and Identity". The music goals have not changed and are now part of the "Creative Expression" learning area.

It should also be noted that the music goals and skills recommended in the *Elementary Music Curriculum Guide 1989*, have not been transferred to the on-line version of the music curriculum. The reason given is that kindergarten is not a mandated program in Alberta and although the music goals and skills were recommended in the curriculum guide they were never included in the Alberta Program of Studies. If through the omission of the music goals it can be assumed that music is to be integrated into the kindergarten program, the inclusion of explicit information on how this integration should take place would be a valid expectation, which to this point has not been met.

The discrepancy between the guide and the on-line version causes ambiguity in understanding the goals of the music curriculum. Since the *Elementary Music Curriculum Guide 1989* is not mentioned anywhere on-line, many new teachers would be unaware of its existence and its recommendations for music in kindergarten. Regardless of this ambiguous situation, teachers include music in the kindergarten classroom to the best of their ability. Ideally, kindergarten students would benefit the most from having the music specialist teaching them to ensure that all the music curricular goals recommended in the guide would be covered. Whether this happens is left to the discussion of principals who may or may not have the resources to provide this for their

youngest students.

The role of music in a child's education, how it should be taught and who should be responsible to teach it has had a long history of debate. The purists or essentialists believe that music should be studied for its own sake while the utilitarians or instrumentalists believe that the arts should be part of school curriculum in order to facilitate the acquisition of broader curricular objectives. I believe that there is room for both philosophies in the school. Kindergarten students would greatly benefit from being taught music as a subject by the music specialist in the school as it would ensure that all music curricular goals would be met through quality instruction by an expert in this area. As well, students would also benefit from the experience of having music woven through a kindergarten program, as it would enhance the learning process and the classroom environment.

In the past decade, educational reform has had a significant impact on childhood education. In 1996 in Alberta, a more formal curriculum was introduced for the first time in kindergarten. This *Kindergarten Program Statement* was revised in 2000 with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. As a result, a more formal approach to early childhood education was beginning to emerge. According to Bredekamp and Copple (1997) there was evidence of a growing trend toward teachers reverting to traditional academic teacher-directed practices when faced with a content-laden and academically more challenging curriculum. As these practices became more and more widespread, a document entitled *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs* by Bredekamp and Copple (1997) was written on behalf of the professional association, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to assist Early

Childhood educators. It outlined the progressive pedagogical methods that were more appropriate in early childhood programs. This document described developmentally appropriate practice or DAP as being a philosophy for teaching children. Wortham (1998) acknowledges that DAP is based on the theories of Erikson, Piaget and Vygotsky and has its historical basis associated with Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Dewey. While DAP may represent the apex of idealistic pedagogical methods for the early years, Bredekamp and Copple (1997) admit that it is very difficult to achieve due to class size, student adult ratio as well as lack of resources and financial support. Although teachers aspire to have their program reflect this philosophy, sometimes, outside pressures get in the way.

Educators are faced with many external pressures with respect to developing an early childhood program. There are many stakeholders in education, with differing opinions regarding what education should be contributing, what curriculum should look like, and how it should be implemented. Policy-makers have increased their interest in measuring students' learning, and consequently, standardized testing has been introduced in early childhood programs. A focus on the need for educators to respond to the gifted child and the child with special needs was added with the *Early Childhood Services Programming Implementation Review (2002)* developed by Alberta Learning. This review set up a monitoring process on a five-year cycle that would ensure that all students' needs are met. However, considering these external pressures, as well as an increasing emphasis on accountability, it is becoming more and more difficult for teachers to provide quality programs that are in accordance with accepted early childhood educational philosophies.

Faced with such difficult teaching contexts, the question arises of whether it is possible through the integrative use of music, to improve the classroom atmosphere as well as enhance children's learning experiences in the classroom. Notwithstanding the need to foster all children's musical development and build foundations for more complex skills and understanding, music offers many levels at which children can enter and participate in musical expression.

Effective teachers are well aware that the more ways of learning are used the more effective learning becomes. According to Bresler (1995) "many teachers view integration as a way to use time efficiently [while] at the same time, many teachers are concerned about providing learning opportunities that will allow the less academically oriented students to draw on their unique strengths and talents" (p.31). She identified four integration styles: subservient, co-equal, affective and social. Subservient integration style would have music serve the basic academic curriculum in its contents, pedagogies and structures, simply to "spice-up" the other subjects. Co-equal integration style brings in the arts as an equal partner, usually seen when the classroom teacher has an extensive background or works in collaboration with arts specialists. The affective integration style helps to set a mood or stimulate creativity, such as when classical music is played in the background while students are doing work. The final style, social integration emphasizes the social function of the school and its role as a community. School assemblies where people come together to sing and celebrate exemplify social integration.

Bresler (1995) states that integration practice rarely presents itself in a pure form but rather in combination. These categories of music integration that she has defined helped frame my analysis of the practices I observed in the two kindergarten classes that

were the focus of my study. The different combinations of music integration that were practiced at each site and their effect on the kindergarten program will be discussed later in chapters four and five.

Research Questions

When, how and why do Kindergarten teachers use music?

Related sub-questions are:

1. How does the teacher's use of music involve integration?
2. What are students' responses to the use of music?
3. How does music contribute to everyday life in the classroom?

Purpose of the Study

This study is a two-case study of two kindergarten classrooms that examines how music can contribute to improving the quality of the Kindergarten Program. It investigates the beliefs and practices of two generalist kindergarten teachers who use music throughout their kindergarten day. The study seeks an understanding of these teachers' beliefs and experiences, and how these in turn influence their teaching practices. It further explores the various ways that music can be used as a teaching tool in a kindergarten program, in that the kindergarten classes that were chosen for this study were not taught music by their school's music specialist, nor did the kindergarten teachers teach music as a distinct subject. This study is situated within a context in which teachers are pursuing a form of integrated music experience in their classroom. The word music is used as an umbrella term to describe the various musical activities woven

throughout a kindergarten day such as singing, chanting and rhyming. This definition emerged from the data. This definition emerged from the data.

Significance of the Study

Music as a distinct subject, at the early childhood level, already has had some attention in the field of research. For his doctoral dissertation, Moore (1991) studied the role of music in kindergarten. Through postal questionnaires, 500 kindergarten teachers were surveyed of which 284 responses were received. Moore quantified the results and found that teachers' understanding of DAP, of the whole child philosophy, their perceptions regarding the role of music in the curriculum, and their own ratings of singing abilities, all had a significant effect on their music practice. He also found that kindergarten teachers' formal music training, their ratings of being able to play an instrument did not affect their music practices. This difference in the ratings of musical abilities suggests that teachers are able to provide singing experiences that are more in concert with their beliefs about music than they are at providing experiences that involve their playing a musical instrument. Courses that included the incorporation of music throughout the curriculum, the learning of music methods and the reviewing and expanding of knowledge of children's songs, along with an awareness of appropriate music resources, significantly affected the kindergarten teachers' music practices. Music programs guided by music specialists did not affect the kindergarten teachers' music practices, for kindergarten teachers' perceptions dictate the way music is used in the curriculum. Moore explains that his study supports the role of the classroom teacher as the decision maker when choosing appropriate music for young children. Although this

is a quantitative study, it outlines categories of issues that surround music practice.

Benson (2000) observed fifteen first and second grade teachers as they participated through a cognitive apprenticeship model where a trainer provided materials and modeled instructions on how to incorporate music into a language arts curriculum. Benson was interested in assessing teachers' knowledge of, and their perceived ability to use music as a tool in the language arts curriculum. Through pre- and post-training surveys and written responses, classroom demonstrations and observations as well as through interviews, Benson found an improvement in teachers' integrative practice. Teachers expanded their use of music both in frequency and more effectively after the program. The training materials, on-going support and encouragement by the trainer, as well as the enthusiastic reactions exhibited by the students all contributed to increasing the teachers' confidence in this endeavour as well a change in their perception of their ability to use music techniques to teach language arts. Although this study was done with first and second grade teachers this process could easily be related at the kindergarten level.

Miranda's (2002) doctoral dissertation examined the implications of Developmentally Appropriate Practice for the kindergarten class who received instruction from a music specialist. Through an ethnographic procedure, Miranda did classroom observations and gathered data with the help of videotapes, audiotapes and field notes. Formal and informal interviews were conducted with the music specialist teacher and lesson plans, curriculum materials, schedules and program materials also became part of the data collection. In this study she identified five global dimensions of DAP which included creating a caring community of learners, teaching to enhance development and

understanding, constructing appropriate curriculum, assessing children's development and learning, and establishing reciprocal relationships with families. Based on these dimensions Miranda found that when teaching practices were congruent with DAP the students were better attuned to the instructional content, activities and interactions in the music classroom and became engaged in their learning. This qualitative study outlined valuable categories and foregrounded a music class perspective.

My study focuses on examining holistically two kindergarten programs where kindergarten teachers make extensive and integrative use of music during their kindergarten day. Classroom visits and interviews form part of the data collection. Through this methodology, the interpretation of this situation brought to light insights into the lived experience of the integrative use of music on teaching, learning and the daily life in kindergarten. As Jardine (1998) states, qualitative research studies can be fecund, meaning that they keep the story going. The intent of this study was to reinforce what has already been done, and by doing so, continue the conversation about the importance of music in kindergarten.

On a personal level, this research has informed my practice as an educator working in kindergarten. I hope to add to the field of research a holistic understanding of the role of music in kindergarten. This research explored the realities of both students and teachers through descriptive case studies. The interpretive inquiry approach that I pursued in my study can, as Jardine (1998) states, "arouse and generate a new and fresh understanding of something already understood" (p.40). The path that I have forged through the case study is my own. My thread to be followed represents a fresh understanding of what is already known about the value of music and its role in the

kindergarten class. Results of this study may resonate with other kindergarten teachers who are examining their own practice as well as support and affirm the importance of using music in kindergarten.

Delimitations

The study will be delimited to:

1. The two kindergarten teachers were from my school district.
2. The two teachers selected for this study were ones who use music throughout the kindergarten day.
3. The two kindergarten classrooms operated in accordance with the Alberta *Kindergarten Program Statement: Revised September 2000.*

Limitations

The findings of the study were limited to the unique situations of each classroom, as well as the limitation of the people involved – their experience and perceptions of both the teachers and their students. Limitations of this study also included my interpretations and descriptions of life in the classroom as it unfolded before me. I felt it was important for the students' voices to be heard but this imposed several limitations to the study. Since some kindergarten children have yet to develop the ability to verbalize their thoughts in a detailed and focused way that adults can understand, this study was also limited by my interpretation of the students' responses to music related questions. It was further limited by the selection of students that appeared to be more verbal and by the use of conversation format, rather than formally interviewing all students. There was also the

reliance on honest sharing and cooperation of the teachers involved in this study. Both teachers chosen for this study are my colleagues and I was very concerned that should any controversy arise from this study, my peers would not be affected adversely.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

As noted in my introduction, in the past decade, there has been a growing trend towards a more teacher-directed approach to instruction in early childhood programs. One aspect of this trend has been structured around the belief that quality early childhood programs should be designed to develop and enhance the learning of each child with the teacher directing this experience. As stated in Alberta Learning's[1] *Kindergarten Program Statement (Rev. Sept. 2000),* "the purpose of Kindergarten is to provide learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate in order to meet the diverse needs of children and promote a positive attitude toward lifelong learning" (p. 1). Notwithstanding the holistic and constructive possibilities that could follow from this statement, what I have seen in practice is that teachers feel compelled to be more directed in their teaching. They feel pressured by the administration, the parents and the public discourse to show their students' achievements in the measurable forms that are often expected. Pedagogical decisions for kindergarten teaching should be grounded in knowledge of child development and learning. As stated by Wortham (1998), "the teacher not only must plan the program for all types of children, but also must understand the contributions of various types of early childhood settings, the contributions of research to the development of quality program models, and the relationships between

[1] In 1999 the Ministry of Education in Alberta changed its name from Alberta Education to Alberta Learning. In 2004, it returned once again to its former name Alberta Education.

theory and practice" (p. 21). The same is true for music education. The use of music in the early childhood classroom is seen as enhancing areas of the kindergarten program.

There has been an on-going transformation and re-transformation of music teaching to younger children as a specialist subject versus a holistic, integrated approach. Despite this dichotomy, there is no doubt that music enriches students' learning and learning experiences. Neuman, Copple and Bredekamp (2000) recognized the importance of music enhancing literacy. Play is crucial to the development of the kindergarten child and music is a fundamental means to encourage play. The importance of music in something as simple as classroom routine becomes enjoyable and meaningful through the use of music. The contributions of music in an early childhood setting are varied and are significant in the development of young children.

This literature review will examine the theoretical and historical scholarly foundation for developmentally appropriate practices for teaching/learning in early childhood education, propose a critique of these practices, consider current holistic concepts for teaching, and review the contributions of music in early childhood programs. It is these principles from which my study has been developed.

Theoretical Basis for Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

In order to be a good advocate for early childhood education, it is important to understand its historical and theoretical bases. Quality programs in early childhood education are based on developmentally appropriate practice, also known as DAP. The theoretical underpinnings of which are grounded primarily in the learning theories of Erikson, Piaget and Vygotsky.

Eric Erikson, a German psychologist who immigrated to the United States, had a special interest in the influence of society and culture on child development. Erikson (1977), outlined several functional stages, one of which he refers to as "Play Age" in which "the antithesis of initiative and guilt comes to its crisis" (p. 77). As DeVries and Kohlberg (1987) explain, "functional stages are representative of differing ego functions in response to different 'crises' involving particular and differing tasks over the entire life span" (p. 13). Erikson's functional stage of "Play Age", occur when children are between the ages of 3 and 6. It is at this stage that children are "curious, imaginative, and are better able to focus their attention [making them better able] to take the initiative by engaging in creative work that they find interesting and by completing tasks on their own" (White and Coleman, 2000, p.159). Playfulness is an essential ingredient insists Erikson (1977). During the "Play Age" stage, "maturing play liberates the small individual for a dramatization in the microsphere of a vast number of imagined identifications and activities" (Erikson, 1977, p.77). Furthermore, White and Coleman (2000) ascertain that it is important that adults at this stage protect children from failure and/or harm by guiding their behaviour, thus supporting the emergence of initiative. It is at this stage that the child may develop a sense of guilt if his or her sense of initiative is not supported by an adult. "It is the weight of excessive guilt that leads to repression in thought and to inhibition in initiative" (Erikson, 1977, p. 102). Teachers who agree with Erikson's functional stage model will not assume "that stages are hereditary and predetermined, and little influenced by adults [but rather] that the child's experience is crucial in getting from one stage to the next in a solid and healthy way" (DeVries and Kohlberg, 1987, p. 13).

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, was primarily interested in how knowledge developed in humans. His background in biology and philosophy greatly influenced his theories of child development. Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory, which introduces a constructivist approach, is also foundational to the concept of developmentally appropriate practice. He proposed four distinct developmental stages (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational) and three processes (assimilation, accommodation, equilibration) that allowed the child to move from one stage to another. Piaget believed that through the processes of assimilation and accommodation, the child not only acquires new knowledge, but also reorganizes existing knowledge. Therefore, "the organization which assimilatory activity reveals is essentially construction and so is, in fact, invention, from the outset" (Piaget, 1953, p. 418). Cognitive development then, was a direct result of a child's maturation and experience that came about through this reorganization of mental processes. In Piaget's view, development leads learning. Along with the assertion that children construct knowledge, Piaget (1953) theorized that experience at each developmental stage, was necessary to the development of intelligence.

Vygotsky, a psychologist and scholar, concurred with Piaget that children construct knowledge. However, whereas Piaget proposed that children construct knowledge from interaction with the environment, Vygotsky believed that social interaction plays a significant role in learning. The social environment that Vygotsky referred to included the social context that is reached by the child such as family, school and community (Vygotsky, 1978). He viewed a child's cultural background and individual history as significant elements that affected a child's thinking. Historical

conditions and human experiences are unique to each person and constantly changing. Hence, it is impossible to adequately represent the dynamic relation between internal and external aspects of development. Therefore, the functional learning system is different for each child even though there may be similarities at certain stages of development (Vygotsky, 1978). Contrary to Piaget's belief that development leads learning, Vygotsky proposed the opposite, that learning leads development in that "human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88). The relationship between learning and development was conceptualized by Vygotsky as the zone of proximal development. He theorized that the zone of proximal development was "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86).

Another concept associated with the zone of proximal development is that of scaffolding. Scaffolding is a support system used in problem solving or completion of a task. According to White & Coleman (2000), it occurs when the more competent partner, adult or peer uses developmentally appropriate and task specific communication as prompts to assist the child in the mastery of tasks while encouraging the child to accept more responsibility as skills increase.

Vygotsky believed that scaffolding should occur in a cultural context. As White & Coleman (2000) state, "an important part of scaffolding is the engagement of children in an interesting and culturally meaningful, collaborative problem-solving activity" (p. 132). The intent of scaffolding is that as children increase the mastery of a given task,

the adult gradually decreases and eventually withdraws his or her control and support.

The ideas of Piaget, Vygotsky and Erikson provide the theoretical foundation of developmentally appropriate practice. DAP was also influenced by the history and the many scholarly contributions in childhood education of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Dewey. The work of all of these men has been fundamental in developing the theoretical basis for early childhood programs today.

Historical Basis for Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The history of early childhood education has influenced developmentally appropriate practice. The historical beginnings of early childhood education are usually associated with Rousseau and Pestalozzi. It was Rousseau, a Swiss philosopher, who inspired the Romantic Movement in philosophy. This period that spanned the late 18th century to the mid-19th century, was characterized by a strong artistic and intellectual view of life.

Rousseau (1999) saw education as an approach that nurtured the natural unfolding of a child's potentials. He asserted ideas about the natural goodness of man. The good life is equated to the simple life. In this approach to education, nature is the child's primary teacher and the child learns by gradual adaptation to, and imitation of, his surroundings. In order for growth to occur, there must be the absence of interference and restriction.

> L'esprit de ses règles est d'accorder aux enfants plus de liberté véritable et moins d'empire, de leur laisser plus faire par eux-mêmes et moins exiger d'autrui. Ainsi s'accoutumant de bonne heure à borner leurs désirs à leurs

forces, ils sentiront peu la privation de ce qui ne sera pas en leur pouvoir (p. 50).

Restriction extended to the children's clothing. Rousseau (1999) believed that children should wear loose flowing items that would free their movements. "Des langes flottants et large, qui laissent tous ses membres en liberté et ne soient ne assez pessants pour gêner ses mouvements, ni assez chauds pour empêcher qu'il ne sente les impressions de l'air » (p.38).

The physical well-being and development of the child was important to Rousseau as it contributed to intellectual development. Physical exercise was identified as an important component of education. "Voulez-vous donc cultiver l'intelligence de votre élève; cultivez les forces qu'elle doit gouverner. Exercez continuellement son corps; rendez-le robuste et sain, pour le rendre sage et raisonnable" (p.118).

Rousseau (1999) insisted that children must experience childhood; that it is an essential phase in the healthy development of a child. It is a world unique unto them, rich with experiences essential to intellectual development. "La nature veut que les enfants soient enfants avant que d'être hommes. L'enfance a des manières de voir, de penser, de sentir, qui lui sont propres; rien n'est moins sensé que d'y vouloir substituer les nôtres" (p.78).

Pestalozzi, a Swiss philosopher, considered to have been the first early childhood educator, took up Rousseau's ideas and explored how they might be developed and implemented. Pestalozzi considered sensory learning to be fundamental to a child's education (Pestalozzi, 1931). True learning was acquired by the direct participation of the senses, by seeing and doing, hence he rejected learning by rote and recitation as well as knowledge acquired solely from books. As Pestalozzi once stated, "the first rule is to

teach always by *things* rather than by *words*" (Pestalozzi, 1931, p.195). Children should learn through activity and should be free to pursue their own interests. He focused on educating the whole child and advocated that instruction should be matched to children's readiness to learn and sequenced from simple to complex skills and concepts. Hence, it is important to learn "to classify observations and complete the simple before proceeding to the complex" (Pestalozzi, 1931, p.53). Pestalozzi (1931) believed that music was the most effective aid to moral education for "if cultivated in the right spirit it strikes at the root of every bad or narrow feeling, of every ungenerous or mean propensity, of every emotion unworthy of humanity" (p. 176).

Another individual who made an impact in early childhood education, is Friedrich Froebel known as the "father of kindergarten" was a German educationalist best known as the originator of a kindergarten system that emphasized play and play materials. He was very much influenced by Pestalozzi's idea that, people are not only influenced by objects that surround them, they also have a desire to influence these objects and thus should become more familiar with them (Tarr, 1989). From this idea he developed his educational materials that he called gifts and occupations. The gifts are what we would refer to today as math manipulatives. They included a number of soft balls, a set comprised of a wooden sphere, cube and cylinder, as well as large cubes that are divisible into small cubes, oblongs and prisms (Froebel, 1967). Occupations "trained children in such activities as drawing, modelling in clay, and using paper and pliable materials in a multiplicity of ways" (Froebel, 1967, p.69). These 'gifts and occupations' for the first time, provided teachers with an educational system with clear directions to follow (Froebel, 1967). According to Wolfe (2000), Froebel was the first to develop the word

kindergarten to describe his program as he "came to see his community as a garden in which children could grow and learn" (p. 82). Froebel believed that children learned through play and activities should be of interest to, and selected by, the individual child (Froebel, 1967). However, "this play was structured in specific ways and sequences, through the use of gifts and occupations in order to promote what [he] saw as the natural, unified development of the child" (Tarr, 1989, p. 117). According to Alper (1985), Froebel believed self-realization and fulfillment were reached through independent play, or self-activity, involving the child's natural imagination and instinctive efforts in modeling the adult world around them. Froebel believed that independent play assisted the children in revealing their inner selves.

Independent play can be further enhanced through song. Alper (1985) emphasizes this notion by stating that, "suitable play experiences in song materials smooth the way for such total and spontaneous involvement" (p.54). These Froebelian ideas inspired Clara Hubbard in 1881 to published a book of songs designed to help children learn about various jobs and work that children might see around them as well as assist them in learning the concepts of the gifts (Wolfe, 2000). For example, children could sing about The Ball or Cube while learning the concepts of these gifts. In turn, these songs would be integrated into spontaneous play.

John Dewey, the American philosopher, educator and scholar, was associated with the progressive education movement which consisted of ideas and practices that were aimed to make school more effective agencies of a democratic society. Progressive educators insisted on the importance of the emotional, artistic and creative aspects of human development. Dewey is also known for his work in early childhood education as

well as for introducing the idea of an integrated curriculum. He insisted that the blending of content areas would render learning more meaningful (Dewey, 1990). He felt that classrooms should reflect the child's community where he or she could learn things and activities associated to the society in which he or she lived. Dewey (1990) believed that "the aim was not for the child to go to school as a place apart, but rather in the school so to recapitulate typical phases of his experience outside of school, as to enlarge, enrich, and gradually formulate it" (p. 106). He felt that it was important to establish continuity between the learner's world of experiences and a curriculum that reflected and further developed these experiences (Hyun, 2002). Dewey (1990) also stated that field excursions were important for children as they could later reproduce by constructive imagination, new environments not linked to a child's world of experiences. This idea is still well accepted today in early childhood programs, as field trips are an important aspect of the kindergarten program.

Child's play was also important to Dewey. He theorized that participation in play activity contributed to children's intellectual and social development and thus it was important to afford occasion by which the child is moved to educe and exchange with others his store of experiences, his range of information, to make new observations correcting and extending them in order to keep his images moving, in order to find mental rest and satisfaction in definite and vivid realization of what is new and enlarging (Dewey, 1990, p. 145).

In *The School and Society* (1990), Dewey thought that a teacher's role should be that of facilitator who encourages social skills by providing opportunities to practice them. As facilitators, teachers had to "decide between the interests that are really

important and those that are trivial; between those that are helpful and those that are harmful; between those that are transitory or mark immediate excitement, and those which endure and are permanently influential" (Dewey, 1990, p. 135). In other words, it is important to offer activities that are educative in nature and at the same time appealing to children's spontaneous interest. He did not believe in the divisions between grades but rather he felt that students should be grouped according to interest and ability (Dewey, 1990). Dewey is considered to be one of the main advocates of progressive education, the tenets of which are still very well accepted and recommended in early childhood education.

It is from the tenets and the teaching/learning practices advocated by Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel that developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) has evolved. Developmentally appropriate practice is a philosophy of teaching that links successful learning to active participation in enjoyable and meaningful learning activities.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice or DAP

Developmentally appropriate practice is a philosophy of early childhood teaching associated with teaching young children. It represents the pinnacle of idealist pedagogical methods for early childhood education. To better understand this philosophy, Wortham (1998) provides seven assumptions about interactive learning and teaching that are related to DAP.

The first assumption is that children learn best in an environment where they feel psychologically safe and their physical needs are met. Bredekamp and Copple (1997) support the idea that creating a caring community of learners promotes "a positive

climate for learning [while] fostering a cohesive group and meeting individual needs" (p.124). They declare that in order for children's needs to be met, kindergarten classes should not exceed 25 students with the support of 2 adults. They observe that, "because older children can function reasonably well in large groups, it is assumed that group size and number of adults can be the same for 3- through 5- year-olds as for elementary-grade children" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p.135). Consequently they deem that large classes without adequate adult student ratio in early childhood programs, is an inappropriate practice.

The second assumption about interactive learning and teaching is that children construct knowledge. This assumption has its roots in the constructivist theories of Vygotsky and Piaget mentioned above. As Bredekamp and Copple (1997) suggest, developmentally appropriate practice occur when "culturally diverse and nonsexist activities and materials are provided to help individual children develop positive self-identity, to construct understanding of new concepts by building on prior knowledge and creating shared meaning" (p.131). They further explain that the student population in today's schools is much more culturally diverse and it is important that as educators we have a good understanding of the social and cultural contexts of our classrooms in order to better meet the needs of all the children. Children come to school with different experiences and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, pedagogical decisions should be made with the knowledge of classroom context in relation to knowledge about child development and learning, and knowledge of individual children.

The next assumption is that children learn by interacting with adults and other children. This assumption is based on Vygotsky's zone of proximal development where

peers or adults scaffold students' problem-solving skills. As Bredekamp and Copple (1997) suggest it is an appropriate practice when "teachers provide many opportunities for children to learn to work collaboratively with others and to socially construct knowledge as well as develop social skills, such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking with other people to solve problems" (p. 129). Being given opportunities to develop friendships as well as time to interact and learn from peers and adults are considered appropriate practices. Wolfe (2000) asserts that Dewey would support this practice as progressive education promotes cooperative learning and inquiry among children.

The fourth assumption is that "children's learning reflects a recurring cycle that begins in awareness and moves to exploration, to inquiry, and finally, to utilization" (Wortham, 1998, p.59). According to Bredekamp and Copple (1997), it is an appropriate practice when teachers give time for children to plan, reflect, and revisit past experiences. However, Bredekamp and Copple (1997) explain that teachers who believe in only one right answer and feel pressured to cover the curriculum, are performing an inappropriate practice and will often fail to provide the revisiting or reviewing opportunities that students would need and benefit from.

The fifth assumption espoused by Wortham (1998) is that children learn through play. This assertion is supported by Bredekamp and Copple (1997) who advocate that teachers "stimulate and support children's engagement in play and child-chosen activities" (p. 128). It is equally important that "teachers allocate extended periods of time (at least one hour) for children to engage in play and projects [and that] children have ample time to explore and learn about the environment, investigate what sparks their

curiosity, and experiment with cause-and-effect relationships" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 126). They contend that teachers need to help children make good use of choice time. Unfortunately, they believe that the growing trend toward more formal academic teacher directed programs in early childhood education that are associated with a more demanding, content-laden curriculum is a developmentally inappropriate practice as it eliminates a lot of the students' choice time to discover, explore and interact.

The sixth assumption is that "children's interests and 'need to know' motivate learning" (Wortham, 1998, p.59). In other words, children learn most effectively when they have an interest. As Pestalozzi said "the interest in study is the first thing which a teacher, and in the instances before us, which a mother should endeavor to excite and keep alive" (Pestalozzi, 1931, p. 201). Therefore in effective DAP practice children are offered many activity choices, many different lures to catch their widely varying interests and skills. Contrary to DAP principles, some programs have become very much teacher directed while providing no opportunities for children's choice and feedback.

The last assumption about interactive learning and teaching is that "human development and learning are characterized by individual variation" (p. 59). Teaching and learning are complex processes where learners each follow their own individual path. Therefore, it is appropriate, as Bredekamp and Copple (1997) advocate, that teachers know each child well and offer the children a variety of activities and learning experiences in order to meet the needs of each individual child.

Unfortunately, some programs promote inappropriate practice when they "attempt to move all children through the same subskills in the same timeframe" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 124). In response to a number of inappropriate trends that were

becoming more and more prevalent the DAP document commissioned by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, was developed (White & Coleman, 2000). With consideration of a variety of contexts, some of the inappropriate practices that emerged included:

> a) a growing emphasis on instruction in academic skills in early childhood programs; b) growth in the number of early childhood programs (…) c) an increase in the enrollment of very young children in early childhood programs; d) an increasing length of the program day to accommodate the need for extended hours of care for children of employed families (p.69).

According to the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists, there still exist today unacceptable trends in kindergarten. White and Coleman (2000) believe that schools need to make adjustments in order to make education more responsive to the needs of children and that only practices that are beneficial to them should be allowed. Teachers continue to report that decisions being made by administrators are "influenced by public demand for more stringent educational standards and the increased availability of commercial, standardized tests" (p.5). As West (2001) notes, and as every teacher and parent knows, principals greatly influence the kind of practices that occur in schools. "True institutionalization of developmentally appropriate practices requires a sustained focus on these practices and a supportive environment to allow for continued growth" (p. 52). In order for this to occur, it is important that there exist an active collaboration and shared vision between teachers and principals (West, 2001).

In my experience, DAP is a constructive concept as opposed to a prescriptive program and as such is subject to personal interpretation. Developmentally appropriate

practice is not something that can be easily seen or identified. Although Bredekamp and Copple tried to define this idea by giving examples of what was appropriate and what wasn't, they have been criticized for being restrictive in the definitions. Their book offers a degree of concrete explanation that is useful to a novice teacher but they fail to address the gray areas that are often encountered in early childhood education. The value of DAP is in the possibility that teachers are constructing practice in a dynamic relationship particular to their situation.

Reconceptualization Of Kindergarten In The Post-modern Era

All proposals of pedagogical practice derive from ideological and philosophical premises and as such warrant critical examination before adoption. It is important to consider alternate points of view for the dominant ideas do not always represent all voices. In *Deconstructing Early Childhood Education* (1997), Cannella offers insight into early childhood discourse with a deconstructivist critique of the modernist presumptions underlying the accepted practices in early childhood education. She asserts that the original views of early childhood education have been influenced by the Euro-American dominant historical knowledge base. The historical perspective was so embedded within ourselves and our own culture that it's validity was never questioned. From a modernist perspective, the concept of early childhood education was based on presumed universal truths applicable to all human beings, grounded in the belief of universal human development and predetermined environmental experience. Cannella (1997) challenged this belief. She pointed out that children's voices were silenced for they were not heard without the filter of an adult. Equally silenced were the voices of the

poor and cultures that did not agree with or respond to the developmental expectations outlined by the modern era conceptualist. Clark (1996) concurs that the voices of the marginalized need to be heard. As an example, here in Canada, Aboriginal people were denied education in their milieu. Children were enrolled in residential schools where they were forced to abandon their culture, religion and language and assume the culture, language, religion and education of Europeans. For too long, the voices of the marginalized have been denied their human complexities and ambiguities and their right to be heard and respected as equal human beings, insists Cannella (1997).

Reconceptualization is "not a doctrine or an end point, but constant critique from which new constructions emerge" (Cannella, 1997, p. 161). Cannella (1997) identifies three themes that under continual examination would provide the value base from which to critique and conceptualize. The first is "social justice and equity as the right of younger human beings", the second "education as hearing and responding to the voices of younger human beings in their everyday lives" and lastly "professionalism as the development of critical dispositions in the struggle for social justice" (p. 162). According to Cannella (1997) "social justice demands active involvement in and with the multiple worlds of the child expanding from the narrow confines of preschools, elementary schools, and child care programs" (p. 163). Because of diverse values, contradictory views of how others should be treated and respected, the quest for social justice will always be a struggle. Her assertion is that social justice should never be the final outcome, but rather the value that "runs through every decision that we make, that saturates the field" (p. 164).

From a postmodern perspective, the concept of a single reality is replaced by the concept of many perspective realities. Realities are no longer represented but constructed. Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) explain that the choices and decisions that are made reflect a particular perspective making it important to dialogue with each other in order to understand why and how these choices were made. According to Cannella (1997) reconceptualization "is not a truth, but a possibility for critique that is embedded within our own human beliefs" (p. 161). Cannella (1998) explains that truth is subjective and created in relationship to the way in which individuals perceive social contexts.

Early childhood education as mentioned earlier is based on the Piagetian constructivist and developmentally appropriate philosophies. As Cannella (1997) points out,

> within a Piagetian perspective, only the voices of those who conform to modernist logic can be heard. The voices of those who would challenge the use or universality of that logic, whether younger or older are disqualified, ignored, or placed in the margin as developmentally immature, culturally deficient, lacking in understanding, or radical. (p. 165)

She further explains that, "the language of developmentally appropriate practice places everyone in the position of speaking with a white, middle-class enlightenment voice, whether that voice is understood or supported" (p. 165). It is interesting to note that teaching materials have been typically Eurocentric. For example, children songs, nursery rhymes, children's storybooks and their illustrations are European in origin and reflect the predominantly white middle class culture. We can no longer ignore the singularity of

our perspectives explains Cannella (1998). As Efland, Freedman and Stuhr (1996) point out the rejection of grand or meta-narrative of psychological childhood development is needed, to be replaced with "little narratives" which represents the views or voices of smaller groups. It is time that all voices be heard and that these individuals be accepted as real and legitimate human beings. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) explain that voices of individuals are multilayered, complex and often incorporated in contradictory discourses. They further explain that, "to speak of voice is to address the wider issue of how people become subjects oppressed and exploited within the various discursive and institutional boundaries that produce dominant and subordinate cultures in any given society" (p. 101). If this complexity is to be our goal, then no single set of methods would give voice to all human beings as "identities, positions, and contexts will constantly shift as we explore our relationships to each other" (Cannella, 1998, p. 176). Cannella continues by stating that, "as professionals, we have legitimized the notion that males rule females and adults rule children" (p. 167). There is therefore a great imbalance of power. Cannella (1998) calls for a radical democratic perspective to give a voice to equity and justice and to embrace diversity, communication, and struggle.

Reconceptualization would mean welcoming controversy and conflict in the name of justice for younger human beings and be willing to fight for an equitable and just community for everyone. This would also require that all human beings be appreciated as the subjects and agents of their own lives insists Cannella (1997). As Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) explain,

> educational criticism must not only call into question forms of subordination that create inequities among different groups as they live out their lives but also

> challenge those institutional and ideological boundaries that have historically masked their own relations of power behind complex forms of distinction and privilege. (p. 194)

Finally, Cannella (1997) concludes that for reconceptualization to develop in the early childhood field, we need to go beyond the ways that we have been taught to perceive and be willing to expand our possibilities.

Reconceptualization of DAP

DAP classrooms do not all look the same. As Lubeck (1998b) explains "teachers may interpret what they are doing differently than evaluators or researchers, and there may be many ways of understanding what is happening in a given situation" (p. 299). The Bredekamp and Copple DAP guidelines have been supported by a discourse and a set of practices reflecting values of stability and certainty from a modernist perspective. According to Lubeck (1998a), modern ideas must now be tempered with a postmodern appreciation for the practical concerns of people in specific situations. As she explains, "we need to tailor teaching and learning to the needs of children in ways that make sense in the moment – not for all time" (p. 287). Dickinson (2002) describes how DAP is now reflected in pedagogical practices that challenge children adequately in intellectually engaging classroom. Gone are the alarmist concerns associated with the trend of formal instruction in academic skills in early childhood programs to be replaced with a shifting view in literacy where teachers are now expected to teach children to read and write in a competent manner. Dickinson (2002) further explains that even though there is an increased support for literacy development in early childhood programs, research tools

that would offer guidance and help monitor the quality of these programs have not yet been developed. Clearly we are in the midst of this evolution that has yet to be completed.

DAP and Music

Littleton (1989) states that DAP in music practice can be found in child-initiated free-play music activities, where children have the freedom to explore and create music as an individual or with peers. She advocates that a balance between both teacher-directed and child-initiated music experiences is essential to achieve an educationally sound music program appropriate for children before the age of seven.

Many educators recognize the importance of child-centered learning. Engaging in child-centered music learning is as vital to children's growth in music as it is to their cognitive, social and emotional development. Turner (1999) describes child-centered learning (which is one aspect of DAP) in music as being a time for children to make and interact with music in their own way. Therefore it is important for teachers to provide music centers with meaningful activities that will promote the students' musical growth. Andress (1998) and Turner (1999) both agree that early childhood music program should include self-selected developmentally and educationally sound musical activities, opportunities for individual and small-group interactions as well as experiences that help children become aware that music is exciting, expressive and beautiful. Examples of such music centers could include exploration of instruments, dramatic play, games with ropes and balls, and listening to music (Turner 1999). Nichols and Honig (1997) observe that when children explore musical sounds they can express themselves freely as they

invent sounds and patterns that are their own. They further explain that, "children learn about themselves and their world as they construct and create musical sounds and shapes" (p.214).

Pestalozzi's music ideas not only influenced child-centered learning but also influenced teaching practices. Pestalozzi was the first to advocate the simple-to-complex teaching order as well as the step-by-step procedure. As Montgomery (2000) explains "teachers were trained not to move on to a next task until at least 70% of the children had mastered the previous one" (p.132). This sequencing of music instruction is very much found in the Orff and Kodaly music approaches. According to Montgomery (2000), through developmentally appropriate sequencing these approaches meet the cognitive, psychomotor, and socioemotional needs of children. However, she notes that by including both Kodaly and Orff teaching strategies into a broader sound before symbol music curriculum would provide children with multiple perspectives of music that would be even more developmentally appropriate.

> As mentioned earlier, Miranda (2004) examined the implications of DAP for the music specialist teaching kindergarten students. She observed that, teachers who seek to construct appropriate musical experiences for kindergarten children need to plan for content and allow opportunities for the children to create and experiment either through extensions to existing lessons or through dedicated time for small groups and individuals to manipulate, explore, and create music (p. 59).

As well, Miranda (2004) noted that when pedagogical practices were in line with DAP guidelines, the students' attunement to instructional content, activities and interactions was evident. She concludes that teacher preparation programs could perhaps

include a course in child development to better prepare the pre-service general music teachers and the transfer of knowledge to practice could be ensured through the implementation of a mentorship program for both pre-service and novice teachers.

Musical Intelligence

If they are to be able to develop effective pedagogical practices, pre-service and novice teachers must be aware of the various theories that support the importance of offering musical experiences for students in the classroom. Gardner, an educational psychologist from Harvard, considered musical talent to be a form of intelligence. He proposed and elaborated a theory of Multiple Intelligences that referred to strengths and talents as intelligences (Gardner, 1983, 1993). He initially proposed the existence of seven intelligences including linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and musical. Later, Gardner (1999) added three more intelligences that include naturalistic, spiritual and existential. According to Gardner (1999), musical intelligence entails skills in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. Individuals who possess musical intelligence are sensitive to pitch, melody, rhythm and tone. Boyd (1989) suggests that if musical intelligence overlaps and intersects with the other intelligences, then music should occupy a central position in the education of a child for it impinges upon the development of all the other intelligences affecting the development of the whole person. Gardner (1999) further explains that our minds are all unique and student education will be most effective if these differences are taken into account.

Curriculum Theory

What is curriculum theory? According to Pinar (2004) curriculum theory "is the interdisciplinary study of educational experience … a distinctive field of study, with a unique history, a complex present, an uncertain future" (p.2). He further explains that curriculum theory is "discovering and articulating, for oneself and with others, the educational significance of the school subjects for self and society in the ever-changing historical moment" (p.15).

According to Eisner (2002b), the modern conception of curriculum was created by progressive educators during the 1920's. Their intent was to emphasize several beliefs considered central to education. These included the importance of having individual students reach their full potential, having students apply knowledge to solve problems that arise in everyday life, employing laboratory methods that allow learners to expand and discover knowledge through a relationship with the environment, and the teachers' roles are that of guides or facilitators working with programs that have been developed based on children's needs and interests (Wolfe 2000). These beliefs are still relevant today and part of current educational philosophies.

There are many definitions for curriculum. Aoki (2004) contributes the explanation that *currere* is the Latin infinitive form of curriculum meaning to run the course. Eisner (2002b) defines curriculum as being "a program designed to engage students in activities or events that will have educational benefits for them" (p. 31). He also defines it as the unique experience that each child has.

As there are many definitions of curriculum, so there are many types of curriculum. The one most familiar is what Aoki (1991) refers to as "curriculum-as-

planned" or in Eisner's (2002b) terms the "intended curriculum"; the document created by the school district, education ministry, or any body of material that is created or planned by the teacher ahead of classroom use. The less familiar curriculum known as the "operational curriculum" (Eisner, 2002b) or the "curriculum-as-lived-experiences" (Aoki, 1991) is the unique set of events that occur during class time between teacher and students as well as between the students themselves (Eisner, 2002b). According to Eisner (2002b) the best way to appraise the quality of a curriculum is to see it in action by observing students and teacher as they engage in their daily classroom experience.

Eisner (1994) asserts that experience "is a necessary condition for knowing, and because the character of experience is dependent upon the qualities to which it is directed, the quality of experience will depend upon what our senses have access to and upon how well we are able to use them" (p. 29). He further explains that, "our sensory system becomes a means through which we pursue our own development" (Eisner, 2002a, p.2). Therefore, it is important for teachers to create and offer different kinds of educational mediums that will engage and stimulate the various sensory systems in students. He explains

> the kind of experience an individual has, depends upon the kinds of qualities the sensory system picks up and because meaning depends upon experience, the character and distribution of qualities in an environment and the particular focus an individual brings to that environment affect the kind of meaning he or she is likely to have (Eisner, 1994, p. 47).

Important to note here, is that students are continuously interpreting events that they experience, and these interpretations are unique to each student. According to Eisner

(2002b), what students experience and what teachers do in classrooms defines the educational process. Educational process "can be thought of as enabling individuals to learn how to secure wide varieties of meaning and to deepen them over time" (Eisner, 2002a, p. 45).

Part of the educational process also includes what is known as reflective practice that involves the teacher as decision-maker. Throughout any typical day, teachers are continually involved in making many decisions and judgements about curriculum, teaching methodology, classroom management and organization, individual students and their needs and problems, as well as personal and professional ethics. According to Norlander-Case et al. (1999) reflective practice involves looking back at situations encountered, on actions taken to counteract a situation or looking at personal reaction in the situation. Three types of reflective practice are identified: reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action and reflection-for-action. Reflection-in-action takes place in the midst of practice while reflection-on-action takes place after the event. Reflection-for-action is the desired outcome arising from both previous types of reflection. This type of reflection should be seen as an "ongoing spiral in which each of the elements of reflective practice is constantly in motion in an interactive process of change and development" (Norlander-Case et al., 1999, p. 31). Reflection is undertaken to guide future action. As decision maker, a reflective teacher must "base decisions and judgements on a solid body of technical and content knowledge that is organized and reinterpreted according to his or her unique experiences [as well as] demonstrate ethical behavior and sensitivity as well as sociocultural awareness" (p. 38).

As decision-makers, teachers play an important role in the curriculum process. Eisner (2002b) notes that curriculum development is the process engaged in by anyone who attempts to make the translation of documents. This occurs when teachers plan for their classes through the creation of materials to be used in the classrooms in the attempt to transform images and aspirations about education. The decisions that teachers make, influences the kinds of opportunities that are created for learning as well as the kinds of experience children have. When it comes to curriculum decision-making, teachers have a range of options that they can exercise in the selection and emphasis of materials used, how they will be used, whether or not it will relate to what is being done in other areas of the curriculum as well as the timing of events. The teacher is also in a position to make the sorts of adjustments that will render the materials used effective to suit the local circumstances of his or her classroom. Therefore, the teacher not only serves as the interpreter of the curriculum but is also "the major mediator of what shall be taught – if not learned – in the classroom" (Eisner, 2002b, p.127). As effective decision-makers, teachers are grounded in theory which in turn influences their actions as well as what they attend to in class. Eisner (2002b) describes teaching as an art in that preconceived intent of a lesson will inevitably undergo a transformation due to the reaction and interaction with the students and by unpredictable qualities and contingencies that come into play.

Aoki (2004) suggests that teaching can be viewed more as a form of improvisation. Instead of seeing teachers as simply being curriculum installers, Aoki (2004) describes teachers as curriculum improvisers where they become more "sensitive to the ongoing life and experiences of themselves and students in the situation" (p. 370).

According to Aoki (2004), this process of improvisation occurs when teaching is in-dwelling between two curriculum worlds: curriculum-as-plan and curriculum-as-lived-experience. Bhabha (1990) refers to this place between two curriculum as the "third" space. According to Bhabha (1990)

> the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. The third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom (p. 211).

He further explains that "hybridity is precisely about the fact that when a new situation, a new alliance formulates itself, it may demand that you should translate your principles, rethink them, extend them" (p. 216). It is in this space that "the interplay is the creative production of newness, where newness can come into being. It is an inspirited site of being and becoming" (Aoki, 2004, p. 420). Aoki (2004) asserts that it is imperative that the interpretive powers of teachers and students be nurtured in order for teaching and learning to have a chance to become inspirited. He further describes this vibrant space, in the fold between these two curricula to be " a site of both difficulty and ambiguity and a site generative possibilities and hope" (Aoki, 2004, p. 322) where pedagogy is located.

The original Greek sense of the word pedagogy means leading children declares Aoki (2004) and in order for teachers to lead the children well, it is important for them to be able to view situations from varied perspectives. Aoki believes that embracing

different theories provides a variety of positions that avoid limited vision of a single view.

Music And Curriculum

In Canada, vocal music has had a long history in the education system. Since the earliest European settlements, members of the clergy played an important role in the musical life of the schools, community and in the churches. Priests and nuns were instrumental in introducing vocal music education in schools in many parts of Canada. In the pubic schools, vocal music was prescribed as a subject in the common School Act of 1846. According to Green and Vogan (1991) tonic sol-fa and rote singing were the methods of teaching music in many parts of Canada at the turn of the 20th century. They explain that in Manitoba the first detailed music curriculum largely based on rote singing, did not appear until 1928. They observe that in 1931 Saskatchewan revised its curriculum, giving attention to the acquisition of musical skills. In Ontario, the Program of Studies of 1937 stressed enjoyment and appreciation of music, as well as the rote singing approach. Goldberg and Scott-Kassner (2002) observed that music curricula underwent transformation during the 1930s due to the influence of the progressive education movement. Based on this philosophy, child and curriculum were viewed holistically and music became an integral part of a child's education. Green and Vogan (1991) report that after the wars, massed singing in the annual spring concert became the trademark of many music education programs across the country. As well, competitive music festivals were popular and very much influenced music education in the schools.

Goldberg and Scott-Kassner (2002) explain that during the reform movement of the late 1950s and 1960s the curriculum was once again transformed. "Music and the other arts [were] approached less from a child-centered or societal perspective and more as disciplines to be studied in their own right" (Goldberg and Scott-Kassner, 2002, p.1054). This perspective came from the sciences where each discipline was considered to have a specific body of knowledge associated with specific methods of inquiry as well as specialists in those particular fields. Green and Vogan (1991) point out that it was during this period that European approaches developed by Carl Orff and Zoltan Kodaly were being introduced in elementary music programs in Canada. These approaches were emphasized only in pre-service programs for music specialists and not in pre-service programs for the generalist elementary teachers. As Green and Vogan (1991) point out, the questions of who should do the music teaching still remains an issue for debate in many parts of Canada, as does the implementation of adequate pre-service programs. How music should be taught is also a concern. As Campbell and Scott-Kassner (1995) state, "formal curriculum helps establish clear goals or outcomes and becomes a structure for directing teacher and student activity and for musical learning to be measured" (p. 269). However, outcomes and measured learning goes against the DAP philosophy. Rather, proponents of developmentally appropriate practices assert that it is through a holistic curriculum that DAP can be best promoted. White and Coleman (2000) theorized that an integrated curriculum ensures that the physical, cognitive, and social-emotional objectives are present in all activities.

Holism

Holism is another concept that can mean different things to different people. To me, holism means to ensure that students are using many of their senses during a learning process. For example when they are singing an action song they are using their body, their mind and even their soul. Holism also means making connections to help learning become more meaningful. Meaningful learning occurs when students are able to perceive relationships and patterns to make sense of information by relating it to their unique past experience and the current environmental context. It is important that students connect their learning to their own world and to accomplish this goal kindergarten teachers often teach through a project approach or through a thematic process.

According to Miller (1988), holism is based on the perennial philosophy that "all things are part of an indivisible unity or whole" (p.17). Gutek (1997) further describes this educational theory as one that seeks "to develop the intellectual and spiritual potentialities of the child to their fullest extent through a subject-matter curriculum" (p. 280). According to Caine and Caine (1995), holism is important because learners are diverse and complex. The ways in which we learn are as unique as we are as human beings. Children develop holistically and as Bredekamp and Copple (1997) explain, it is important for early childhood educators not to lose sight of the 'whole child'. Children's domains identified as physical, social-emotional and cognitive develop simultaneously as each domain influences the others (White & Coleman ,2000). By understanding that children develop holistically, teachers can best meet their students' educational needs through an integrated curriculum. As Wortham (1998) declares, an integrated curriculum

is child-centered and accommodates individual interests as well as provides opportunities for children to learn from each other and the teacher.

Miller (1988) notes that, "holistic curriculum explores the relationship between mind and body so the students senses the connection between the two" (p. 73). Students learn through all of their senses. According to Newman (1998), "everything that gets into the brain enters through the senses [and] because of this, it is important that children use their ears, eyes and hands so that the brain learns to be receptive" (p. 23). Peterson (1992) concurs for "one's entire body can be thought of as a way of knowing from a holistic perspective" (p.134). This is why it is important for children to be offered opportunities for exploration through play. Bredekamp and Copple (1997) suggest that it is appropriate practice when "teachers plan and prepare a learning environment that fosters children's initiative, active exploration of materials, and sustained engagement with other children, adults, and activities" (p.125).

Teaching practices should support children's intellectual development while at the same time enhance their social, emotional and physical development. However, Bredekamp and Copple (1997) observe that "there is a fundamental disconnect between knowing that children are different and expecting them all to learn the same way at the same time" (p.39). More emphatically, Upitis (1990) states "it is ridiculous to think that every child will acquire the same knowledge, by the same method, and in the same order" (p.15). Even when well aware of this, teachers often find it difficult to change when policies and procedures mandate both traditional materials and traditional practices (Peterson, 1992). As quoted above, Wortham (1998) warns that inappropriate academic curriculums, and outside pressures make it difficult for kindergarten teachers to provide

quality developmentally appropriate programs. Pedagogical choices that teachers must make, when faced with the mandated curriculum, is a real dilemma, as the curriculum does not always encourage developmentally appropriate teaching practices. It is expected that all students achieve the curricular requirements in order to progress to the next grade. Peterson (1992) is forthright in articulating this political/pedagogical dilemma when he states,

> It is unfortunate that educators and politicians responded to the lack of learning by increasing the emphasis on skill instruction, increase fragmentation, and preaching accountability. [...] Teachers on the one hand are asked to be submissive to authority and on the other to provide "excellence" to the students they teach. (p.138)

Acquiring knowledge is a personal endeavour and each student must learn to benefit effectively from his or her learning experience. The holistic curriculum identifies the student in relation to community and environment. As Peterson (1992) points out, "holistic teachers accept that people are intentionally connected to the world and view learning as a conscious search for creating unity and making sense of experience" (p. 76). Connecting content to real life helps make learning more meaningful for children. Dewey (1990) also agrees on the importance of making connections between school and the child's community or home environment.

> The child shall have the same attitude and point of view in the school as in the home; that he shall find the same interest in going to school, and in there doing things worth doing for their own sake, that he finds in the plays and occupations which busy him in his home and neighborhood life (pp. 166-167).

Peterson, (1992) believes that learning is not a passive activity but a partnership; students learn from one another. As Vygotsky pointed out making meaning of issues, circumstances or events can be enhanced through dialogue. "In dialogue, one person doesn't control the meaning making, but joins with others to make sense of experience" (Peterson, 1992, p. 109). It is important to listen to others and appreciate how they interpret our meaning in order to deepen our own understanding. Vygotsky believed that social interaction played a significant role in learning. He was very much interested in students' potential development. As mentioned earlier, the zone of proximal development (the relationship between learning and development) addressed how students could progress with the assistance from others. According to Peterson (1992), "holistic teaching seeks to appreciate students for who they are and what it is that they can do" (p. 82). When a teacher accepts the students for who they are is evidence of caring. According to Chaskin and Raumer (1995) "it is through the attempts of caring and responsive teachers to recognize, understand, and respect their students that trust is established and caring interpersonal relationships are built in classrooms" (p. 673).

Trust in your students is an essential in a holistic setting. "Trusting children means giving them enough time and an environment that make it possible for them to become engaged in a meaningful activity without a great deal of direction on the part of the teacher" (Upitis, 1990, p.28). Trust and empowering students go hand in hand. According to Peterson (1992), authority in a holistic learning community means empowering students to take the initiative, think for themselves, and assume responsibility for their learning and not that of control or obedience requirements. As Upitis (1990), noted the more opportunities students are given to actively participate and

be responsible for their learning, the more they will learn.

An effective teacher will not only transmit knowledge but will also display a caring attitude that is even more important with today's fast-paced society where the teacher is assuming more roles than ever before in order to meet the students' needs. Caring is a value grounded in relationships (Chaskin and Raumer 1995) and establishing a commitment to caring for others in a classroom can result in the classroom becoming a community. Community connections are valued and fostered in the holistic curriculum (Miller, 1988) where building a caring community of learners enhances the learning environment. Newman (1998) concurs that an "effective curriculum does not only exist inside classroom walls [but] it is powerfully rooted in its real life community" (p. 24). Teachers who foster caring relationships are aware the community of the school and the broader community from which their students are drawn, as well as the particular context of their classroom. As Richards and Milligan (1998) observe, "child-centered should incorporate both the school and the community as interconnected elements" (p. 81). Teachers play an important role in helping their students make these connections.

Both Pratt and Dewey believed that field trips were beneficial as they ensured "first hand experiences that would be the basis for more elaborate play later on [that] would lead to investigations and activities to increase understanding" (Wolfe, 2000, p. 318). Therefore connecting our knowledge to the world around us enhances our understanding. Peterson (1992), among others has noted that learning through the use of fragments of information is not effective. It is in experiencing wholes that enhances the learning experience. Crowell (1995) concurs that our assumptions about the work drive our practice and "if we think that our world is divided into objects that are basically

unconnected, then we will tend to divide our curriculum into subjects, topics and unrelated categories" (Crowell, 1995, p.12). This view also held by Dewey (1990) states that the child "goes to school, and various studies divide and fractionize the world for him" (p. 184). The world is becoming more tightly interconnected and the next generation of children will be expected to think in a more global way. The internet has made world wide communication feasible and common place. It is a global economy where events in one part of the world can impact many different countries. We are all connected and problems that arise need to be solved by all of us.

Miller (1988) associates a divided curriculum with atomism, a concept traced to ancient Greece where "Democritus conceived of Nature as empty space and atoms" (p.10). Atomism in the curriculum has stressed segmentation. According to Miller (1988), segmentation in education is not only evident in curriculum where it is divided into subjects but also in the way we separate the head and the heart. Such hurdles to making connections do not promote accessing multiple ways of learning, knowing and understanding. As Jardine, LaGrange and Everest (1998) note, as teachers, we are all "living out a deep cultural logic of fragmentation [and have] participated, directly or indirectly, in the strange efforts at curriculum integration that sometimes result" (p.122). According to Efland, Freedman and Stuhr (1996) a Postmodern conception of curriculum involves interdisciplinary content.

Integration and Thematic Teaching

Early childhood educators have long understood the need to integrate a child's development and learning, and have stressed the importance of never losing sight of the

whole child. As a result, integration has always been part of the teaching and learning experiences in kindergarten. The concept of integration can take many forms and be interpreted in many ways by different people. A common integrative practice found in kindergarten is teaching through thematic units where different concepts are taught under a common thematic backdrop. Thematic teaching is one way to integrate the curriculum in order to make learning more meaningful and relevant for children. According to Prince Altieri and McCart Cramer (1996), "a thematic unit may include but is not required to include, all subject areas within the curriculum" (p. 56). Another form of integrative practice often found in kindergarten is the project approach. Project work consists of having children explore and investigate a particular topic that is of interest to them in order to improve their understanding of the world they live in. As Katz and Chard (2000) explain "there is no single way to incorporate project work into a curriculum or teaching style; the significant feature is that some time is allocated to experiences in which children make careful observations and inquiries into worthwhile topics over a sustained period of time" (p. 3). Although integration can take on many forms, it is important for teachers to have a clear understanding of its purpose. Jardine, LaGrange and Everest, (1998) observe that holistic educational trends have sometimes resulted in "connections that sometimes seem forced and trivial, betraying a rushed, ultimately unsatisfying lack of attention and care to anything in particular" (p.123). They suggest that true integration or wholeness should involve "an attention to place and memory, and relations and community" (p. 126). Rather than being concerned about how a concept can fit into a theme, holistic teaching should be fostering a deeper understanding of a topic through looking at it from different perspectives and making

new connections. In short, integration should focus on how the meaning of a concept can be enhanced.

However, can the integrity of certain disciplines be lost with integration? Music specialists are gravely concerned that this might be the case. They fear that music will be nothing more than the "handmaiden" of curriculum. When it is the responsibility of generalists to teach music, some often choose to integrate music in their program in order to support other subject areas, while others choose to marginalize music in response to time constraints or to their lack of comfort or confidence in their music ability. As Montgomery (2000) states, "children have often been at the mercy of an individual teacher's psychological comfort regarding music" (p.128).

Potentially, the integration of music into a child's daily school life can be very beneficial for them. As Anderson and Lawrence (1995) note, children "will discover that fundamental musical concepts-such as unity through repetition, contrast, and balance – are inherent in many subject areas." (p.3). As Campbell and Scott-Kassner (1995) suggest, using music to teach language arts, can provide children with rich holistic experiences that stimulate language usage and motivate them to want to read, spell, write and speak. Therefore, learning can be improved when ideas and information can be introduced using the strategies and structures provided by music. Boyd (1989) concurs as she describes that, "early musical education should not focus unduly upon skill-acquisition, with performance as its principal objective, but rather be integrated into daily life as a spontaneous manifestation of social and emotional development both at home and in the kindergarten" (p.2). Dewey (1990) would agree as he considered music to be valuable and important in a child's education. In his view, music not only develops a

child's moral and aesthetic nature but also his or her intellect. "I know of no work in the school that better develops the power of attention, the habit of observation and of consecutiveness, of seeing parts in relation to a whole" (Dewey, 1990, p. 174).

Holism And Music

The question of whether music should be integrated in a holistic teaching and learning program, or be taught as a distinct subject, is very much a pedagogical dilemma. According to Willingham (1998), "the arts are integrative by nature [for] not only do the arts honour body, mind and spirit relationships; they are transdisciplinary in their own creation, presentation and embodied content" (p. 118).

According to Upitis (1998), integration and specialization are both right ways to teach music. "Teachers who promote the integration of subjects, in contrast to those who state that, there must be specialization for learning to occur, are both right as both kinds of learning opportunities are important" (Upitis, 1992, p. 160). However, as Scott-Kassner (1999) points out "infusion of the arts in the curriculum can provide children with varied and creative ways of knowing but this use does not constitutes music-centered learning" (p.20). According to Hanley (1998) aspects of egalitarianism espouse that specialists have a narrow understanding of what children need to learn to contribute to connection-making across subjects. This would mean that egalitarianism would then support generalists being responsible for the delivery of music in their program. Some believe that classroom teachers, know children and the school curriculum, and thus are better able to relate music to other subjects in the curriculum.

Although Prescesky and Cooley (1998) note that generalists are often not confident in integrating the arts into their program, it is Upitis' contention that "as the generalist teachers increase their knowledge as artists, their growing passion will find its way into the classroom" (Upitis, 1998, p. 149). Upitis (1992) strongly believes that "many elementary teachers, even those who don't read music, can nevertheless teach children to read and write music, as they learn along with their students" (p. 1). As Hanley, (1998) points out "constructivist educators are willing to learn along with the students, encourage thinking and provide opportunities for students to become aware of their own learning" (p. 173). Upitis (1990) argues that generalists can have an important role implementing music into their program and she suggests that "teaching and learning about music need not lie in the hands of the music specialists alone, but should be a form of expression and learning that pervade the classroom environment, complementing and supplementing the work of the resident school music teacher" (Upitis, 1990, p. 2). She further suggests that teachers do not need know how to read music to encourage learners to create their own.

Upitis (1990) strongly believes that any teacher can develop a music lesson where students learn about sound, experiment with sound, create a sound composition and then share their creation. However, in order for this to happen, she insists that students should have more opportunities to improvise and compose during music class. She also explains that musicianship can be developed by integrating music with all of the other subjects, especially with the visual and dramatic arts. It is "acceptable to borrow from different music teaching approaches, but it is also a good thing for a teacher to take any exploratory activity that he or she is comfortable with and use it as a springboard for

teaching music" (Upitis, 1990, p. 140).

Hanley (2003) suggests that in order for students to acquire deeper knowledge and understanding of concepts from the music curriculum, it is important for music teachers to provide a constructivist environment in their music class where students have the opportunity to develop their own understanding and personally grow within a community of musicians. She advocates that teaching concepts should not be done in isolation but within a more holistic approach. Montgomery (2002) concurs as she explains that it is important for students to be placed at the center of the music learning process, a process that should include a broad spectrum of musical experiences such as singing, playing classroom instruments, moving with music, composing, improvising, and listening to music. By helping the students make connections about music through these various musical experiences, as well as providing them with opportunities for reflection it is hoped they will gain a deeper personal musical understanding. Hanley (2003) further describes the importance that music activities be more open-ended where students can choose their own path instead of following one that is predetermined by the teacher. A reconceptualized view of the music curriculum sees learning as organic, evolutionary and unpredictable rather than as a mechanical, sequenced and linear mental activity. It is only through a better understanding of modernism and post-modern thought and pedagogical practices associated with each perspective that teachers will break away from past practice and, evolve and improve as pedagogues.

Music And Play

Through the eyes of many adults, play is seen as something frivolous that children do. However, play is more appropriately understood as a dynamic engagement with process and an invitation to active learning. Elkind (2003) insists that "play is as fundamental a human disposition as loving and working. We play because we are programmed to play; it is part of human nature, and part of animal nature as well" (p. 46). Playing and learning go hand in hand. According to Burman (1994) play is "central to language development since games provide the context for joint activity with others and 'tension-free' opportunities for the exercise and exploration of abilities" (p. 116).

Peterson (1992) explains that learning happens best when teachers follow the student's lead. Play is an essential element in community life. In a holistic setting, play is seen as a way for students to make cognitive, social, and emotional growth (Peterson, 1992). As Littleton (1989) suggests, play can be pleasurable, spontaneous, purposeless, active, serious, self-initiated or a pathway to learning. Tarnowski (1999) believes that child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play is an essential component of DAP. As a kindergarten teacher, I believe that play is indeed a key component to a successful year in kindergarten. It is of paramount importance that students have an enjoyable experience during their first year of schooling in order for them to continue to look forward to attending school and thus become life long learners.

According to Littleton (1989) and Tarnowski (1999) play can also be connected to music for music play gives children an opportunity to explore sound making, to be creative and improvise as well as be spontaneous and active without any teacher directions. Tarnowski (1999) also explains that when play includes original songs, it

enhances language development as well as musical understanding. Andress (1998) states that combining Vygotsky's theories with Piaget's concerns about children's involvement with concrete objects can provide a scaffolding opportunity where adults can embrace an inter-active play approach with the music learning setting.

Tarnowski (1999) admits that music teachers feel comfortable when assuming the roles of director and entertainer. As she explains "while the roles of 'director' and 'entertainer' are valuable tools to have in our repertoire of teaching strategies, these roles do not always encourage the children to invent their own play, so they are not encouraged to construct their own knowledge". (p. 28). Therefore, it is important for music teachers to create a learning environment that is conducive to musical play, rich in high-quality materials, where students can take risks without the fear of failure.

However, "even teachers who believe that there is learning in play still harbor doubts about dropping the carefully planned scope and sequence curricula" (Upitis, 1990, p. 12). Accountability remains predominant in the mind of every teacher.

Music and Language

The concept of using music to teach and enhance students' learning is not new. As Neuman, Copple and Bredekamp (2000) suggest, "songs and chants offer endless opportunities for children to enjoy and explore language" (p.55). The use of songs also provides opportunity to work on rhyming and other sound patterns as well as develop language (Fisher and McDonald, 2001; Neuman et al., 2000). Pre-schoolers' attention to phonemic awareness can be heightened through the singing and rhyming of chants and songs, as well as the clapping or tapping out the syllables of words. Forrai (1988) notes

that rhymes are important in kindergarten teaching and that their musical value is as great as that of children's songs. Campbell and Scott-Kassner (1995) theorize that it is evident that there is a link between language, speech, chant, and song. Through singing, children can expand their vocabulary as well as understand ways in which words fit together. Montgomery (1998), declares that

> when one compares the sound before symbol practices that elementary classroom teachers use to facilitate development of phonemic awareness with the sound before symbol practices that elementary music teachers utilize to promote music reading, one discovers a pattern of similar teaching practices which begin to provide evidence for a pedagogical connectiveness between these two areas. (p. 60)

Fisher and McDonald (2001) believe that music is an excellent way to explore concepts of printed text. They point out that the left to right reading approach is also present in music reading.

Music and Classroom Routines

According to White and Coleman (2000) music can also enhance playful routines. For example, a daily classroom routine can become playful when children are asked to sing a song while completing an everyday task. As Petersen (2000) describes, routines and schedules can only become developmentally appropriate when they involve the use of movement and engaging activities in students. As well, transitions in a classroom happen most effectively when they involve music. Feierabend (1990) believes that routines are important for children and suggests that singing a greeting song and a good-bye song on a daily basis, will help provide a routine. He also suggests that by singing

words rather than speaking them can impose structure and "create a musical framework that will increase the likelihood that student attention will be obtained and maintained" (p.23).

Music and Community Spirit

As we all know from our own many communal singing opportunities from campfires to church congregation, music is most enjoyable when shared with others. Music has been known to enliven the spirit of community in the classroom. Peterson (1992) declares that singing, movement activities, and choral reading, all contribute to the bonding of a group. Page (1995) agrees that music can build communities for music making as well as enhance togetherness and group identity. Campbell and Scott-Kassner (1995) developed this thought even further by suggesting that, "children are socialized through music, and recognize their membership within a group through music that is shared among its members; singing games increase their integration within a group, just as a school song offers children a common bond with other children" (p. 4). When music is used holistically in the classroom, "children are stimulated intellectually, physically, and even spiritually in their recognition of music for its own sake as well as its integration with their knowledge of the humanities, the sciences, and the social studies" (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 1995, p. 5). Music can enhance teaching content, as well as joyful learning in a classroom.

Place

There has been a lot of research done regarding children and their special affinity or bond to certain places, and the importance and significance that these places have played in their lives (Chawla, 1992; Herrington and Studtmann, 1998; Perry, 2003; Sandberg, 2002). Ellis (2002), explains that there are many definitions of place because the "placeness of a place is a subjective or intersubjective creation only apparent to the individuals or group members who created it" (p. 70). It is associated with security, comfort, stability, nurturance, belonging, meaning and identity (Ellis, 2004b). Space on the other hand, is associated with freedom and according to Ellis, (2004b), there is a need for undefined space where young children can grow and develop creatively. Ellis (2002) notes that

> children's place and space can be understood as a form of curriculum – the lived experience that shapes and enables their growth and learning. Pedagogically, place can be understood as facilitating nurturance, especially through meaningful relationships, while space can be understood as affording opportunities for growth and creativity. (p. 69)

She insists that school should not only include space for creativity and growth in students but should also be a place that affords positive identity and belonging insists Ellis (2002). It is important that teachers make school the best possible place that it can be "for some students, school may well be their most stable and nurturing place" (Ellis, 2002, p.84). As Ellis (2004a) explains places that support creative play among children not only facilitate social affiliation and identity but also contribute to the development of culture that is rooted in place. She continues to explain that places that are well equipped,

accessible, culturally rich and that provide a positive identity and integration with a cohesive community, support belonging and growth for children while enriching culture. However, Ellis (2004b) warns that poorly planned place can leave children isolated, alienated and marginalized. Planning that does not consider children's needs can provoke emotional and physical discomfort.

Significant place is frequently bound up with significant others (Ellis, 2004a). Relationships can be built through a shared attachment to a place as our past history of human interaction is reflected in place attachment. As Ellis (2004a) describes, place attachment is important for "it enables people to share experiences with others and to form themselves into communities with continuity over time" (p. 25). "The people that children have relationships with give meaning to their localities and support the construction of identity through place" (Ellis, 2004a, p. 30).

It is important for researchers to study people's experience by interpreting the context of everyday life as Langhout (2003) states, "the examination of context is essential to provide anything other than an individual-level analysis" (p. 230). It is only through more studies of students' everyday lives that policy and practice in schools could be enhanced. As Ellis (2004a) explains, "if we recognize the significance of place in the curriculum of children's everyday lives, it behooves us to evaluate the places available to the young" (p.28). Since schools and classrooms can be considered as significant places where children develop and grow, it is important that as educators we ensure that these spaces do indeed support the needs of children for their optimal development. Kindergarten teachers or caregivers of young children "would have ideas about improvements to their localities that could extend their opportunities for supporting their

children's development through social interaction, play, and exploration" (Ellis, 2004a, p. 32). "Good" places are a source of belonging, identity and security but also include space for exploration and creative self-expression (Ellis, 2004a, p.33). As Osterman (2000) describes, "the need for relatedness involves the need to feel securely connected with other in the environment and to experience oneself as worthy of love and respect. In essence, then this need for relatedness is the need to experience belongingness or the sense of community" (p. 325).

Students must experience a sense of belonging in order for their classroom to be deemed "a good place" (Ellis, 2004a). According to Chawla (1992), there is evidence that children are attached to a place when they are happy to be there and regretful or sad to leave it. Special places that children relate to may have a lasting effect. As Ellis (2004a) explains, "children's places are important both for what they contribute to the quality of children's lives and the enduring effects they leave after childhood is over" (p. 38). It is interesting to note that place has a direct impact on children's experiences and it is important to consider how place enables or limits these experiences. As Ellis (2004) further explains, "the social and physical conditions of children's lives are both interdependent and constrained by place"(p. 39). Up to now, children have had very little opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes when it comes to creating spaces for them in the community. More input is needed from children for as vulnerable and dependent individuals, they are in the most need of space and support for growth and can only make the best of what adults have created for them (Ellis, 2004a).

Caring Place

As mentioned earlier, caring is an essential element for teaching in today's classroom. According to Smith (2003), in order to develop a caring atmosphere in a classroom, caring relationships between students and teacher as well as amongst the students themselves is required. Teachers and students must get to know each other on a more personal level, and Smith (2003) explains that this can be accomplished through the sharing of personal histories. By sharing our past experiences in the world, teacher and students become better acquainted with who is talking. Smith (2003) further explains that with such knowledge, the pedagogical journey of both student and teacher is based on trust and mutual engagement rather than on a domination/subordination relationship. A classroom should not only provide a caring atmosphere, but also be a place of peace seeking and peace finding for students. "Pedagogical living in the classroom oriented to peace operates in the tension between completion and incompletion, between knowing and what is yet to be revealed" (Smith, 2003, p. 49).

Rasmussen (2004) observed that children shape their everyday lives predominantly in three settings – their homes, schools and recreational institutions, all of which have been created and designated by adults. "Children's places are often less conspicuous than places for children" (Rasmussen, 2004, p. 162). He explains that 'place for children' becomes a 'children's place' only after a child has connected with it physically. Places that children relate to, point out and talk about is termed 'children's places' and these are most often quite different than an adult's perception. This is why it is important for both adults' and children's perspectives be heard in order to develop the most adequate understanding of children's places. Place research is important and must

continue for its

> findings can inform consideration of whether social and physical conditions for children and youth support adequate human development. Awareness of the quality of life supported by the places available to children and youth should have implications for practices in school. (Ellis, 2004b, p. 95)

Summary

Many early childhood educators feel that standard curriculum teaching practices are much too rigorous to effectively foster the developmental potential of the child. Increasingly, educators are investigating new ways to alleviate the stress of content delivery, and more educators are turning to music to help them with this (Foster et al., 1999). According to Goldberg and Scott-Kassner (2002) learning subjects through music is an educational reality. They explain that "while learning a subject matter through music may not focus on learning music as a discipline, [it does] offer an opportunity to engage with music and musical concepts and in the making of music" (p. 1063). The choice of subject for my study, the role of music in kindergarten, was conceived in this notion and in this spirit. What appears as a conflict between DAP/ holism and the discipline-oriented academic curricula that is in place in schools today has motivated me, after seven years of teaching in kindergarten, to further investigate how teachers are trying to resolve this problem. I felt that it was important to include the literature that pertains to music being taught as a subject and the issues that surround this topic to better understand how my study fits into the whole of research. However, in this study, the context in which music will be observed and studied is in its integrative use throughout a

kindergarten day to enhance teaching and learning.

The following chapter outlines my study design. My fundamental concern was how music that is used in an integrative manner can contribute to the quality of a kindergarten program. When, how and why these teachers use music, the students' responses to music, as well as the role that music plays in the everyday life experience of the classroom, were questions that also contributed to the design of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Design of Study

The study was designed to explore and document how two kindergarten teachers' integrative use of music in their kindergarten class contributed to improving the quality of the Kindergarten Program. I was interested in knowing when, how and why these teachers used music as well as how music played a role in the everyday life in the classroom. Also, it was important for me to include the children's voices and bring to light their responses to the use of music during kindergarten. Subsequent to a review of the literature, it became obvious to me that the most suitable way of conducting this study was to do qualitative research taking the form of case studies of two kindergarten classes with an interpretive emphasis.

According to Merriam (1998) qualitative inquiry is: "an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (p. 5). With regard to studies in the field of education, qualitative inquiry is advantageous because it enables the researcher to "simply seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved" (Merriam, 1998, p. 11). Inherent in this process is a flexibility, with respect to inquiry and sensitivity to those involved.

The study in which I have engaged was naturalistic, taking place in the field, the natural setting of the kindergarten classrooms where the phenomenon I studied was the role of music in a kindergarten program and its relationship to the overall Kindergarten Program. As Eisner (1991) observed, there are multiple ways in which the world can be known since all have different experiences that shape our lives and influence our perspectives for viewing the world. The perspectives and worldviews of the kindergarten teachers and students were of particular interest in this study.

Qualitative Case Study Research

My research can be understood as a qualitative case study using two sites. A case study is a "social and intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or unit" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27) in which the most important characteristic is that of delineating the object of study. Peshkin (1993) observes that qualitative studies can have descriptive, interpretive or evaluative emphases. Descriptive qualitative studies involve a detailed, sensitive and accurate account of people, settings, situations, relationships and systems. Case studies with an interpretive emphasis may offer (a) clarification and understanding of a complexity, (b) elaborate or develop new concepts and/or theory, (c) provide insight that change behavior, (d) refine knowledge or identify problems (e) create generalizations. Evaluative case studies focus on policies, practices and innovations. This case study that I have pursued has an interpretive emphasis and hermeneutics determined my understanding of conducting interpretive research.

Merriam (1998) further explains that case studies can be particularistic, descriptive and heuristic in nature. This study is particularistic as it focuses on a specific

situation, event or phenomenon that being the role of music in kindergarten and its effect on the quality of the kindergarten program. My collection of data from multiple sources results in a study that is descriptive and heuristic in nature. A case study that is heuristic in nature can "illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study [and] bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader's experience, or confirm what is known" (Merriam, 1998, p. 30). By developing a comprehensive holistic description of the phenomenon, I sought to advance my own understanding and insights about kindergarten teachers' and students' experiences when music is used in a kindergarten class and how music can enhance both teaching and learning processes.

Case study research can involve the use of multiple case studies where the researcher uses more than one case to conduct a study, as in my study where I have studied two different kindergarten classes. My study was designed to explore different dimensions of the use of music in a kindergarten room. The two teachers selected brought to the study different ways that music can be incorporated into a kindergarten program. The context of the classroom, urban versus rural, as well as varied years of teaching experience between the two teachers are others elements that contributed to the diversity of both sites. This research has been conducted as two independent case studies. However, at the conclusion of this study, their characteristics were compared. Were I to attempt to identify only specific teaching techniques and use of music that are inherent in both groups, I would be denying my intended audience a richness of the diverse approaches used by the teachers in the study. As Merriam (1998) states, "The more cases included in a study, and the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be" (p. 40).

Interpretive Inquiry

Most educators will agree with Eisner (1991) that "not everything can be said in a test score; for some things we need literary forms" (p.22). Rich descriptions of the social world are valuable and using qualitative research as a mean to interpret the educational world enables researchers to say what cannot be said through numbers. As Scott and Usher (1999) point out, survey research fails to capture the reality of life in school. In interpretive inquiry, the researcher usually starts with a practical concern. In my case, my concern is about how a teacher's integrative use of music can contribute to improving the quality of the kindergarten program.

Interpretive inquiry is the systematic effort to advance one's own understanding of a phenomenon. It is through interpretation that clarification and understanding of the complexities being studied will emerge (Peshkin, 1993). This study proceeds from the assumption that there is no one objective reality, and that realities are constructed socially by individuals (Merriam, 1998). Peshkin (1993) further explains that each method of data collection provides a different and usually valid glimpse of reality. The realities in my study are the experiences and perspectives of the students and teachers from the selected kindergarten classes. In order to do interpretive work, the researcher must approach it using everything relevant that he or she knows. I examined the kindergarten classes and applied, as effectively and diligently as possible, my knowledge, training and experience as a kindergarten/music specialist and the theoretical frameworks I developed through my doctoral program. Using these experiences and theoretical frameworks, I attempted to develop a rich understanding of how a teacher addresses the concerns that were central to this inquiry.

Paradigms are viewed as a set of basic beliefs that represent a worldview for its holder (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Constructivism is a paradigm that encompasses the range of concepts and processes that fall appropriately into this field of study. In constructivism, the

> realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions. (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, pp. 110-111)

Therefore, in order to come to understand better the phenomenon being studied, the researcher explores the multiple realities that are developing before him or her. The manner by which he or she describes these realities, allows other people to more easily relate to them. However, the understanding of these realities is unique to each individual as he or she is responsible for constructing his or her own meaning.

We all bring our personal beliefs, history, biography, and cultural backgrounds that all contribute to our horizons or prejudices that make our interpretations unique. I entered this study with all my prejudices and perspectives as a kindergarten/ music specialist as necessary aspects of my investigation. As Gadamer (1975) explains, "we must always already have a horizon in order to be able to place ourselves within a situation" (p. 271). In that regard, my own stance as a kindergarten/music specialist was present throughout this study, from its conceptualization, to its research design and methodology as well as in the descriptive and interpretive accounts.

Gaining Access / Selection of Participants

The two teachers who participated in my study are from my school district. Prior to initiating this study, as part of our ongoing professional development, all kindergarten teachers met approximately once a month. It was during these meetings that I took the opportunity to discuss my research project with various kindergarten teachers in the room. During these discussions I also asked them to share their teaching situations, the amount of music that they used in the classroom as well as their comfort level with music and from these discussions that I was able to delimite my search for participants. The sample selection was therefore purposeful in the sense defined by Merriam (1998) who states that, "purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (p.61). The selection criteria that was essential in my case, was engaging teachers who use music throughout their kindergarten day to participate in my study. Before I visited each of these prospective participants at their school to further discuss my study, I provided them with a letter that outlined the research and the nature of the participants' involvement and asked for their participation (see Appendix A). It was essential that the conduct of this research complied with the University of Alberta and its ethical guidelines as well as the Cooperative Activities Program (CAP) from the local school board. Once my study was approved, the district's associate superintendent contacted me at home to advise that I could now approach kindergarten teachers in the district who might want to participate in this study.

The participating teachers were both kindergarten teachers from two different schools who reported that they made integrative use of music during their kindergarten

day. Both agreed to have me observe their classroom. Protocol also required that I asked the principal's permission and accordingly, I set up an appointment to meet with each principal to discuss my study. Both principals consented to have me conduct a research study in their school as long as it was agreeable with their participating kindergarten teacher. Because I also intended to observe the kindergarten students during my visits and to have informal conversations with them about music in the classroom I also needed parental and student consent. Two letters were sent to the homes of the students. The first one for the parents explained the research and the nature of the student's involvement. The second letter was for students to sign for their consent. It explained my research and their role in a language that could be understood at their level (see Appendix B). Informed consent was obtained from all students and teachers at both sites.

Data Collection

The collection of data occurred over a period of six weeks, at times mutually agreeable to the participants and me. Data were collected primarily through classroom observations, taped interviews, on-going conversations with teachers and students throughout the study. A comfortable relationship was established with each participant so that continuing dialogue could be maintained over the next few months through e-mails or phone calls, thus providing an opportunity to discuss and clarify each participant's practices, as observed during the study, and to more fully assess the teachers' thoughts and my own emerging ideas about the role of music in kindergarten.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations of each kindergarten class were made on a regular schedule of an average of three half days each week, over a six week period. Field trips, swimming lessons and a literacy pull-out program were some of the reasons why a complete week at a site was impractical. The fieldwork schedule was purposefully flexible to accommodate the participants' comfort and convenience. Field notes were compiled both during and after each visit and were organized chronologically by date and time. These included descriptions of the teachers' actions, students' reactions, verbatim comments and paraphrased talk from both teacher and students. Also included were teaching and learning activities that occurred as well as descriptions of processes and the context of the classroom. The involvement of students in the activities of the classroom as well as their reactions formed an important part of the context of the classroom. After each visit, I typed up my field notes and reflected back upon what I had seen.

As I journeyed through the process of observation, I found that the path I followed as a researcher was to some extent parallel to Bostroom's (1994) characterization of himself as a video camera, a playgoer, an evaluator, a subjective inquirer, an insider and finally, a reflective interpreter. The early entries of my field notes pertained to how the day unfolded in kindergarten, the schedule, and the activities that were happening during that day. As I typed my notes at the end of the day, I found myself reflecting upon what I had seen and recorded and added in the details that I had missed. More importantly, it was at this point that I started asking questions about what had occurred. Learning how and what to observe improved as the research progressed. According to Eisner (1991) "knowing what to look for makes the search more efficient,

at the same time, knowing what to look for can make us less likely to see things that were not part of our expectations" (p. 98). As the days passed I stopped seeing the class as a whole group and started seeing the individuals with different personalities in the class. I began to understand the dynamics and relationships of the group and wondered what their role was in the drama that unfolded before me. Bostroom (1994) refers to this stage as becoming a playgoer where one becomes interested in the ongoing drama of the classroom. I sat on a small kindergarten chair just outside the students' circle. I was never perceived as an evaluator and avoided this by continually monitoring the data that was being collected as well as my role as a researcher. Being a kindergarten teacher, I continually reminded myself that my role at that particular moment was that of researcher and my task was to observe the kindergarten sites with fresh eyes in order to observe the familiar objectively and to avoid making premature evaluation or judgement. Bostroom (1994) then explains that the observer begins to look more deeply at what is occurring and becomes more interested in the meaning of events. As the classroom activities unfolded before me I began to wonder what exactly was the role of music in the processes of learning and teaching and what exactly were the benefits. Bostroom (1994) then describes how the researcher soon becomes an insider. As a participant observer I tried to fully immerse myself in the setting under study to better understand it from an insider's point of view. I had the opportunity to interact with the students during their time in educational centers and had informal conversations with the children during the kindergarten day. Through these informal conversations with the children, I managed to obtain the perspective and reality of music in the kindergarten class from some of the more verbal children in the classroom. A fusion of horizons was starting to happen. I

started to see the part-whole relationships concretely just as Merriam (1998) had described as "how all the parts work together to form a whole" (p.6). According to Bostroom (1994) it is only then that a researcher can become a reflective interpreter.

I began to wonder about the impact that music had on the different children and their experience in the classroom. Already I was starting to interpret and analyze what was happening before me. It was therefore comforting to know that in Bostroom's view, "interpretation does not begin only after a bedrock of 'data' has been collected; it begins the moment the observer walks into the classroom. As observers change, so do the data" (p. 58). It was my responsibility as a researcher to ensure that the acquired knowledge moved forward by the most effective process. This required on my part a continual self-consciousness and introspection in monitoring my own process of observations and assessments throughout the study. As Eisner (1991) explains, "seeing rather than mere looking requires an enlightened eye" (p. 1) and as the study progressed my ability to see with an enlightened eye also developed. I strove to develop my researching skills into what Eisner calls connoisseurship, meaning the "ability to make fine-grained discrimination among complex and subtle qualities" (p. 65). At the end of my observation journey I felt that my role as a researcher had progressed and developed. I was now ready to assemble all the data into one meaningful account indicating what I had learned.

Interviews

My interviews with the two participating teachers were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix C). This one-hour taped interview

with each teacher occurred during the data-collection period. During the interviews, I listened carefully to my participants' responses mindful of Merriam's comment that "a good communicator empathizes with respondents, establishes a rapport, asks good questions, and listens intently" (Merriam, 1998, p. 23). I also attempted to keep the interviews conversational so that the participants would be able to emphasize their own interests, perceptions and experiences relating to music in the classroom. I listened for narratives and used them as the unit of analysis. The interviews were audio taped then transcribed. Transcripts were made available to the participants to confirm accuracy of the information and an understanding of the intent, and to clarify any misinterpretation or omissions with the transcripts. The final interview provided an opportunity to discuss more deeply the teacher's thoughts as well as to clarify some teaching practices that was observed during the study.

Data Analysis

Eisner made the observation that "Information becomes data only if a researcher is able to make it meaningful" (Eisner, 1991, p.185) so with that in mind, I was determined to give a voice to the ambiguous nature of the information that required assessment and interpretation.

There were many ways to organize the data. For example, one might have proceeded through thematic structures or events over time. During my first read through the data, I used Dollard's (1935) seven guidelines that Polkinghorne (1995) provides as a starting point for my analysis. The seven assumptions included:

1. Looking at the cultural context of the case study and how it contributed to the plot.
2. Looking at the various aspects that could affect the participant's personal goals and life concerns.
3. Knowing who the significant people were who affect the actions and goals of the participants and looking at the relationship between the participants and the other people involved.
4. Looking at how the participants interact in their setting, their choices and actions, how they move toward an outcome and its significance.
5. Finding out the histories of the participants, including past experiences and how these have manifested themselves in the present as habits.
6. Looking for the specific context in which the plot takes place.
7. Assessing the occurrences to see if they are plausible and understandable.

By using these assumptions as a guide, I was able to look at the data from different perspectives. From here, using the process known as open coding, categories started to emerge and I started to label each incident, idea and event. This process is known as open coding. According to Sowell (2001), "open coding breaks data apart and allows researchers to compare phenomena for similarities and differences" (p. 148). When the data was all coded, I began to group together labels that seemed to have common features or themes. When I was left with labels that did not fit into any categories that were

originally developed, I reconceptualized new categories in order to ensure the inclusion of them all. From there, I continued to reexamine the categories chosen, and then reduced and pattern coded the data in order to find categories and patterns that suggested themes. This is known as axial coding, in which Sowell (2001) recommends considering these questions:

- What are the conditions that give rise to the category?
- What is the context in which the category is embedded?
- What are the strategies by which the category is handled, managed, or carried out?
- What are the consequences of these strategies? (p. 148)

The process of data collection and analysis is concurrent and informed by my understanding of interpretive inquiry. The process is similar to that of an unfolding spiral where each step represents a loop and each loop represents "a different attempt to get closer to what one hopes to understand" (Ellis, 1998a, p. 20). The ebb and flow that occurs in our understanding is part of hermeneutics and the arcs of the hermeneutic circle.

Hermeneutics, "the study of interpretive understanding or meaning" (Mertens, 1997, p.11), has been compared to the movement in a circle where whole and part relationship understanding develops. Gadamer (1975) reported on Schleiermacher theory that, "understanding is always a movement in this kind of circle, which is why the repeated return from the whole to the parts, and vice versa, is essential" (p. 167).

According to Chambers (2003) "hermeneutics refuses foreclosure on the answer to any question; instead it requires scholars and practitioners to remain open to questions

and possible answers, each answer being only a temporary resting place on the journey of deeper understanding" (p. 228). While I was looking for a deeper understanding of my observations, I realized that this understanding would be temporal. I tried to remain open to all possibilities - to capture a moment, knowing that my interpretation of the events was at best the interpretation of that particular moment.

My first review of the data led me to the labeling of categories or events when and for what purpose music was used. These first impressions or initial interpretation would be considered to occur in the forward arc of the hermeneutic circle. Through re-reading and questioning what was in the data, I was able to move back and forth through the arcs of the hermeneutic circle. The constant back and forth movement represented an attempt at trying to understand the micro and the macro relationship of how specific songs fit into the whole of the kindergarten program. As Ellis (1998a) explains, "to understand a part, one must understand the whole, and to understand the whole, one must understand the individual parts" (p. 16).

In this regard, it has been important for me to understand how the music component complemented the overall kindergarten program. Eventually some new categories began to emerge which in turn guided the direction of the study. Interpretation was ongoing and continually changing. What was learned in a loop of an unfolding spiral could change the direction of the study quite dramatically. Ellis (1998a) observed that you cannot know where you are going until you get there and I did not know what specific direction this study would assume. According to Eisner (1991) "it's more a matter of seeing what works, what appears right for particular settings, and creating different perspectives from which the situation can be construed" (p. 211) for there are no

absolute or singular procedure, formula or a set of rules when doing a qualitative inquiry. It was important for me to remain flexible and let the data guide me. Eisner (1991) states that, "researchers must adjust their course of action based upon emerging conditions that could not have been anticipated" (p. 170). The hermeneutic circle continues to operate as an unfolding spiral representing the movement of the interpreter's understanding of the subject being studied (Ellis, 1998a). It was during the backward arc that I began determining what I had not seen before and discovered new information and a few surprises. These surprises are also known as "uncoverings". One of the real surprises that arose for me from the interview was Lorraine's extensive musical background and how even as a beginning teacher she had used music as a teaching tool.

Researchers are "meaning-makers that continually integrate new experiences into old categories" (Bostroom, 1994, p. 53). My topic already has a long history of attention and therefore the purpose of this research is to better inform and improve my teaching practice, as well as motivating intellectual dialogue concerning the significance of music in the kindergarten program. This process reinforces and hopefully will advance what has already been done. As Jardine (1998) states, interpretive inquiry can "arouse and generate a new and fresh understanding of something already understood" (p. 40). What I am adding to the field is a holistic understanding of the how music can enhance the learning and teaching experience in a classroom. Both the teachers' perspectives and kindergarten children's perspectives and voices have been considered and included in this study. The path that has been forged through the case study is my own. As Peshkin (1993) explains

> the travels we take down the 'infinite path' can only be facilitated by the type of research that gets to the bottom of things, that dwells on complexity, and that brings us very close to the phenomena we seek to illuminate (p. 28).

The thread to follow represents a fresh perspective and understanding of what is already known about the importance of music in kindergarten programs. As Ellis (1998a) explains "the readers should have enough illustrative material to enable readers with different perspectives to form their own interpretations" (p. 32). It is imperative that the readers be able to follow my journey of coming to a new understanding during this study. Qualitative researchers have the responsibility to persuade. According to Eisner (1991),

> how studies are designed, the kind of instruments used, the settings studied, the statistics employed, and the way data are interpreted, are all ultimately intended to yield a persuasive case that will withstand the doubts of skeptics and the attacks of those whose values lead them to see the situation differently (p.40).

He goes on to say that "we are persuaded by weight, by the coherence of the case, by the cogency of the interpretation" (p.40). Guba and Lincoln (1994) further suggest that, "no construction is or can be incontrovertibly right; advocates of any particular construction must rely on persuasiveness and utility rather than proof in arguing their position" (p.108).

It is important therefore that interpretations preserve the integrity of the subject that is being studied. As Willis (1998) states, it is "integrity … that fundamentally grounds the issues of reliability and validity – and not whether specific rules have been adhered to" (p. 269). Trustworthiness of this study has been made possible by the corroboration of my classroom observations, the interviews with teachers, the informal

conversations with students and the analysis all of which have resulted in a thick authentic description of the phenomenon being studied. Validity, as Eisner (1991) explains, happens through structural corroboration including observation, interview and analysis, a process known as triangulation. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) assert that, "triangulation is not a tool or strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation" (p. 2). Ellis (1998a) points out that, "concerns about 'validity', stem from the fear that without validation procedures interpretive accounts might be viewed as mere opinion or speculation" (p. 29). She further suggests that, "an interpretive account is neither a guess nor a speculation [but] the working out of possibilities that have become apparent in a preliminary, dim understanding of events" (Ellis, 1998a, p.29). The plausibility of this account rests on the sensitivity of the researcher and the corroboration of researcher and participants to ensure valid interpretation of the events at that moment in time.

Language, like interpretation, is framed by our forestructure and developed by our changing horizons according to Ellis (1998b). What I wrote and how I wrote this account made all the difference. Eisner (1991) states that, "it is important that the researcher chooses the best way to relate to his readers what was observed. It is through the writing of the study that the readers have an opportunity to understand what was experienced" (p. 2). It is only through the sharing of our experiences through interpretations that our understandings will broaden. As Ellis, (1998b) reminds us, "by sharing the knowledge from each of our locations through dialogue we develop a fuller understanding of the places we inhabit together" (p. 8). This process can be understood as a fusion of horizons, the combination of the personal life experiences of the reader intertwined with the interpretation of the writer's account. Smith (2002) explains that in order to obtain a

fusion of horizons, openness to each other's prejudices and opinions is essential. It is through dialogue, questions and answers that we broaden our horizons as well as better understand others' horizons. According to Ellis (1998b) our horizons are linguistic, and it is through the medium of language that a fusion of horizons takes place. Since language and understanding are linked, it is impossible to have a final or fixed understanding of ourselves, or of others (Ellis, 1998b). Since our language and our horizons are continually undergoing change, so do our interpretations, making understanding transient. Interpretations of the same subject also change with changing events and the researchers' differing experiences. Uniquely correct interpretations are impossible to obtain " since perception is interpretation and each person perceives from a different vantage point and history" (Ellis, 1998b, p.8). Gadamer believed that horizons are impermanent and ever changing "while everything is understood from a point of view, this point of view is changing and enabling rather than fixed and restricting" (Ramberg, 1997, p. 462). Eisner (1991) agrees as he indicates "perspectives alter, and those we choose or are compelled to use are related to the features of the context at the time" (p. 49). I am cognizant of the fact that my interpretations as well as the readers' are those of the present and could change over time.

Summary

In this chapter on methodology, I have provided an overview of qualitative research, and explained why qualitative research was best suited to the purposes and questions of this study. I have given a detailed description of the case study method, which was used in this study. In addition, I have discussed in depth each component of

my research design, from gaining access, to how I collected and analyzed the data.

In the next two chapters, I present the two case studies and the results of my data analysis of this study. In Chapter 4, I present an extensive description of each kindergarten teacher's personal story in order to place their practice within the context of their experiences, beliefs, and knowledge. Throughout the account, pseudonyms have been used for both teachers and all students in order to protect their anonymity. In Chapter 5, I present the interpretation of my observations.

CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDY ONE

The School

As I drive down this quiet Township Road, I get my first glimpse of the school that is still a distance away. It then disappears as the road dips and winds around a slough. When I approach the entrance to the school's parking lot, the treed road gives way to an open field where the brown-bricked school stands. When I get out of the vehicle, only the peaceful sounds of the birds' early morning songs break the stillness of the fresh May air welcome me. Upon entering the school I feel a comfortable sense of belonging. The principal and the secretary are very warm and welcoming and readily offer to help me in any way that they can. It is only 7:20 a.m. and many staff members are already busy getting ready for the day.

The school is approximately 25 years old with its glory days well behind. The present school population only stands at 217 students from kindergarten to grade 6. As I walk through this sprawling school with many hallways, I notice some rooms that are empty and others that are used as storage space. I wonder what it was like twenty years ago when there would have been five hundred students from kindergarten to Grade 9.

The Kindergarten Rooms

Lorraine, the kindergarten teacher has taken advantage of the school's available space and works out of two rooms. The one room she uses mostly for storage or small group work. There is a teacher desk in the room as well as a table to work with a small

group of students. This room has also become a storage room for discarded school furniture.

The main kindergarten room is a large space across the hall from the one I just described. By strategically placing shelving units and tables, Lorraine has divided this room into 5 distinctive sections: a circle area, a worktable area, a craft/big block area, a science and technology area and, at the centre of the room, is the reading corner and playhouse centre. When you first enter the room, there is a listening centre where students can listen to storybooks on tapes. Beside this centre is a shelf with books that also serves as a divider to the technology centre. Next to the computers is the teacher's desk and two file cabinets. To the right of the classroom entrance is the carpet area where the students get whole group instruction. The *circle time* area delineated by bookshelves, has a colourful area rug with the alphabet around the perimeter, icons at each corner representing the four seasons as well as a numerical wheel at the centre circle displaying different sets of items for each number from 1 to 10. This rug is used as a teaching tool as well as to help the children with their seating arrangement. In one corner of this area, I see a white board for the *morning message* along with a large chair for the teacher and small chair for the special student of the day known as the "VIP". On the one side of the circle area is the science centre. At this table is a fishbowl with a gold fish that gets fed on a daily basis by the VIP student. In May, when I did my observations, there was a display of rocks and fossils in front of the fishbowl, to be examined with a magnifying glass and in June a number of insects were available for observation. The work area on the other side of the circle area consists of six tables. Students practice their printing and crafts skills, and also have their snack here. The *playhouse* centre located in

the middle of the classroom, is surrounded by the *reading corner*, the work area, as well as the *big blocks* centre. In the big blocks centre, the teacher has placed a large table for when students are working on an extensive art project. In that same area, there is also some counter space where children can leave their works of art to dry or to be completed at a later date. Two paint easels are nearby as well as a water table and a sand table. The children's bathroom is located in the corner.

The walls of the room mostly display the children's work. The south wall consists of pictures that students have drawn of their family and posters of the food groups. On the west wall there is a thematic bulletin board with children's work that change along with the monthly theme. Above that bulletin board is the *word wall* made of mostly student's names. On the north wall there is a black board and items associated with the daily calendar activity. Above the bulletin board hangs the Canadian flag and beside the flag is a birthday graph that consists of the row of months at the bottom with names of the students above each month indicating their birthdays. The east wall's space is used mostly to celebrate students' growth; "I Lost My Tooth", in the shape of a tooth notes the date when a particular student lost a tooth. "I Can Tie Shoes" consists of a little shoe that includes the child's name and the date that he or she could finally tie his or her own shoes. "I Know My Phone Number" consists of an icon of a telephone with the child's name on it and the date when he or she could recite his or her home phone number. In another corner of the room, the teacher has also used some of the bulletin board space by pinning envelopes to the wall used to help collect various permission slips and student forms. (See Figure A for an illustration of Lorraine's room arrangement).

FIGURE A

Entrance
Book rack
Chart paper stand
Listening Centre
Science Centre
Book Rack
Computer Centre
Filing Cabinets
Teacher's Desk
Window
Parent work area
White Board
Teacher's Chair
VIP's Chair
Circle time area
Shelf with math manipulative
Book Shelf
Reading Corner
Play House
Big Block Centre
Table for art projects to dry
Painting Centre
Counter used for art projects
Water Table
Work and snack area
Sand table
Bathroom

The Students

Initially, there were 27 students in the kindergarten class but on the second day of my observation one girl moved away. From then on, there were 12 boys and 14 girls in this kindergarten class which was deemed large enough to warrant the support of an enrolment aide. The students live on acreages or on farms and they all take the bus to school.

The student population in kindergarten reflects that of the school which is predominantly white and middle class. One little girl is of Aboriginal descent and has been adopted by a white family. There are no students with special needs in the class. I found the students to be very friendly, warm and welcoming. They seem to be used to having visitors in their classroom and thus approached me and made me feel welcome. The students for the most part were very well behaved. A handful of students who were seated in the middle of the rug seemed the most active and needed more redirection from the teacher. The teacher indicated that this group was the best kindergarten class that she'd ever taught. According to her, there were some strong students however, for the most part, the class consisted of average students all of whom were expected to successfully move on to first grade.

A Typical Day in Kindergarten

School starts early. Busses arrive between 7:45am and 7:50 am. As students arrive in the school, the teacher and her aide are out in the hallway to greet the students. Once they step into the classroom they must first exchange their books for the "Home Reading Program" and find their way onto the carpet with a classroom book. Students

help themselves to chopsticks that they use as pointers to practice tracking print as they develop their emergent reading skills with the book that they have chosen. The first bell rings at 8:00 a.m.. The day starts with the national anthem "O Canada" being played on the P.A. system followed by school announcements. The students have all gathered on the rug for a fifty-minute whole-group activity known as *opening circle* that always starts with the "Hello" song. The "Hello" song is used to greet any visiting adult in the room. After the song, the students turn their attention to the morning message which is an activity led by the teacher and assisted by the VIP student. Here, the teacher has chosen a sentence or a question that will generate discussion. The VIP student assists the teacher in writing out the message. This activity is also done to develop the students' literacy skills. The sentence that is chosen generates discussion during the taking of attendance when each child will answer questions or say something about the sentence when they are called upon during roll call. Following this, the students participate in a calendar activity. First the students sing about the days of the week and part of this song asks the VIP student to tell the other students what his or her favourite day of the week is. At this point, the VIP student tells the rest of the class what is his or her favourite day of the week. The students then sing the "Months of the Year" song. During this activity students are encouraged to stand up as they hear their birthday month being sung. Lorraine likes to vary this activity by having all the students first stand up and then they are to sit down as they hear their birthday month being sung. Lorraine then goes through the lesson of the day that includes the introduction of the letter of the week, a literacy activity or a craft activity. For about fifteen minutes following this, the students go to the work area and work on a literacy book activity that consists of printing a particular letter

of a word or a sentence. During this time, the students have an opportunity to work on a craft that is related to the month's theme. For example, in June they worked on a Father's Day card and did hand prints with plaster of Paris. The teacher then directs the students to the various learning and activity centres that they will attend that day. The students stay at their designated centres for the next half hour and then go out to recess.

After a bathroom break the VIP student undertakes the "Show and Share" event where the VIP student shows and shares a special object near and dear to his or her heart that he or she has brought from home. A fifteen-minute snack time follows after which the group gathers once more on the rug for a numeracy lesson.

The math lesson leads into work on some form of numerical activity book. After work time, the students regroup on the rug for closing circle. At this time, a story is shared as well as more songs and poetry. Before students are dismissed they all sing a goodbye song that includes lyrics in four different languages. At dismissal time, parents or caregivers are usually out in the hallway waiting to take their children home. As a safety precaution, the aide calls the children one by one to come and meet their adult who will take them home. The kindergarten class concludes shortly after 11:00 a.m..

Lorraine's Story

Lorraine has taught for approximately 18 years. She started teaching when she was 18 years old. However, after her first year, she felt that she was too young, and was having too much trouble with discipline, so she ventured into her next career. She worked for the next four years, as a social worker before moving to the Northwest Territories where she successfully returned to teaching for four years. When, her husband was

transferred to Ontario, Lorraine devoted the next 18 years to raising her children. In the mid-eighties Lorraine's family moved to Alberta and it was during this time that Lorraine returned once again to teaching. Although her major in university was English and Social Studies, she taught Social Studies, and Math at the high school level. In the late eighties she returned to university to get her Early Childhood Diploma and eventually moved into a kindergarten teaching position six years ago. Regardless of these accomplishments, Lorraine asserts that her first love is Math and she told me that if she had to start her life over, she would be an engineer. Formerly she said, women were only encouraged to be nurses, secretaries, or teachers.

Lorraine comes from a musical family. Both her parents and maternal grandfather were musicians and some of Lorraine's earliest memories are of her grandfather singing to her.

> My mother's father loved to sing and I can remember him having me on his lap and he would sing to me. The first song I remember that he sang to me was 'You Are My Sunshine'. That was on the top of the hit parade in 1940—it was several years after that that he sang to me! (Laughter) (EI October 9, 2003)

Lorraine describes her father as also being musically inclined. According to her, he played the accordion, the violin and the saw.

> When he was young, his family had a piano, but he never learned to play it. He did play an accordion, a violin and a saw. When he was in his 20's, he occasionally played for the dances in the local one-room school. When he was in his early 50's he had an accident that cut off most of his left ring finger, making it more difficult to play the violin. He had also lent the violin to his nephew for many years, so he hadn't had it around for many years. Instead of the violin, he played the saw. I remember on the farm, he had made his own bow from the hair from a horse's tail. Even without a bow, he would play the saw

> by tapping it. When he was retired, he was frequently asked to play the saw in Swift Current for groups, schools, etc. He was part of the band. My mother's sister played the piano, a friend played the mouth organ and another friend played the accordion. (EI October 9, 2003)

Lorraine goes on to describe just how much music was an integral part of his being. "My father was full of music. You could often catch him tapping his fingers, and when asked what he was doing, he would say he was just tapping out music that was in his head" (EI, October 9, 2003).

Her mother sang in a church choir and in a quartet, and also played the organ at church.

> When I was really young, we had a pump organ and my mother would play that. She played mostly hymns. She used to play the organ at the church my family attended when I was very young. Later, she used to sing in the church choir and in a quartet. I can remember standing beside her in church and trying to sing alto like she did. (EI October 9, 2003)

It is evident that both her parents and grandfather have all greatly influenced Lorraine musically. As an adult, Lorraine has sung alto for church and community choirs (I. May 15, 2003). As well, she reported that her mother "encouraged us to learn to play the piano. When I was about 6 or 7 years old, my parents bought us a used piano and my older sister and I took piano lessons" (EI October 9, 2003) and Lorraine earned her Grade V in piano from the Royal Conservatory of Toronto. She no longer plays piano for enjoyment as she admits to play "only if I'm learning a new piece. I have children who play better than I do, so when we are together with the family my children play" (I. May 15, 2003).

The value that Lorraine has for music has come full circle as she has instilled in her children what her parents had given her musically. Lorraine has three sons and an adopted daughter, who have all had piano and singing lessons. The youngest son is a music teacher and her daughter still plays piano for pleasure.

Lorraine has used music as a teaching tool many times throughout her teaching career. When posted in the Northwest Territories her assignment was to teach a kindergarten class of Inuit children to speak English.

> **L**: I taught a nice little kindergarten class with children who did not speak English. They spoke Inuit.
> **MBW**: Did you speak Inuit?
> **L**: No.
> **MBW**: How did you engage with them?
> **L**: Well there we actually did a lot of things with singing again too. We would put simple English words to music, and they learned a lot of English that way. (I, May 15, 2003)

Even though Lorraine and her Inuit students could not understand each other's language at the beginning of the school year, by the end of the kindergarten year, the students could speak some English. Lorraine had accomplished this task by using songs as a teaching tool. Lorraine still uses a lot of music throughout her kindergarten day and feels that it is a great teaching way to engage all children in a range of learning experiences. She believes that all kindergarten teachers should have good grounding in music because "music is such an aide in teaching so many skills" (I. May 15, 2003).

How The Teacher Uses Music

Based on my observations and conversations with Lorraine, I was able to categorize the various ways that music is used in her classroom. Lorraine uses music in

her kindergarten class in a variety of ways: to enhance students' self-esteem and socialization, to celebrate their growth, to enhance the teaching of content and to improve literacy development in her students. Music plays a role in the routine sequence of activities as well as during transition periods throughout the kindergarten day. She uses music to help her and her students with the rhythm of the classroom that is the natural ebb and flow of the various classroom activities and their transitions from one activity or task to another.

Since "O Canada" is played through the P.A system every morning, Lorraine has taken this opportunity to teach her students the lyrics to "O Canada". This is a very challenging song for young little voices and the various arrangements heard daily were not always in an appropriate key for these children. However, I was impressed by how well they knew the lyrics as well as by their enthusiasm to participate in the singing. As a former high school Social Studies teacher, Lorraine believes that it is important for students to know the national anthem.

> I love to sing "O Canada". I wish the recordings would be in my key so that I could sing it properly for the children. Most of all I think it builds Canadian patriotism.
> We as Canadians ought to be able to sing our own national anthem, and I think it's a very appropriate way to start the day…by singing our Canadian national anthem. It's good for building up unity of the whole country not just a school. And it funnels all the way down to the schools and the classroom no doubt. (June 10, 2003)

She also believes that it is important for students to know how to address any adults in the room appropriately, so she has helped all of the students learn the last name of their peers' parents' through a greeting song. Immediately after "O Canada", the students sing the "Hello" song to greet and welcome the guests in the room. This greeting song is first sung in a generic way (See Appendix D) then it is sung to every

adult guest in the room. While singing this song, Lorraine has her students practice a cross-clapping exercise from the *Brain Gym*[2] program. The philosophy behind this program suggests that when an individual has mastered the ability to cross the central midline of the body, he or she "can process linear, symbolic, written code, left to right or right to left, an ability fundamental to academic success" (Dennison & Dennison, 1997, p. 1). Although she is not devoted to *Brain Gym*, Lorraine is open to trying new things to help her students. She admits that in the very least, cross-clapping can improve a student's coordination as well as enhance their engagement as an active participant.

Lorraine also uses songs to enhance the teaching of content. As part of the daily calendar activity, the students learn about the days of the week through song. During this song, the VIP student must name his or her favourite day of the week. At this age, students like to let other people know what their preferences are and this song gives them this opportunity. Following this activity, student learn about the months of the year and their birthday through the 'Months of the Year" song (see Appendix D). For this song, the students start by standing up and as they sing through the months, they sit when they hear their birthday month. Not only does this really motivate the students to learn when their birthday is, the song also provides an opportunity for students to stand up and move around after sitting for a while.

Lorraine has worked very hard at improving her students' self-esteem. Every day there is a VIP child who gets to assist the teacher in various ways such as writing the morning message and helping with the calendar activity. The VIP child has an

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[2] Brain Gym developed by Paul E. Dennison and Gail E. Dennison is a series of quick activities that integrate both mind and body also known as Educational Kinesiology that help student prepare for specific thinking and coordination skills, challenging any learning block ©1989 by the Educational Kinesiology Foundation.

opportunity to show and share an object from home that is near and dear to his or her heart. As part of this ritual, the class sings to the child the "You Are Special" song (see Appendix D) during which the VIP has a solo where the child affirms that she or he is special. Lorraine feels that all children in her class need to know that they are all unique and valued as individuals and it is important that they go through the exercise of affirming this themselves.

The students also have an opportunity to learn about initial consonance through the "Fee, Fie Fiddleeio" song (see Appendix D). By replacing the "F" in the "Fee, Fie, Fidleeio song and replacing it with the first letter of the VIP child's name it teaches the sound of the first letter in the child's name as well, the rest of the class are exposed to their peers' initial consonance on a daily basis thus covering a wide range of letters. They also get an opportunity to say a poem that rhymes with their name. The original poem uses "Rolie Polie up, up, up," and students then must use their name and make it rhyme. For example Cindy Windy up, up, up. When the VIP cannot think of a rhyme on his or her own, the class offers suggestions and the student chooses the one he or she finds most pleasing.

For the celebration of a student's birthday, Lorraine has made a special cake out of a box covered with royal icing. It has a little train on it that serves as candleholders. The child must indicate how many candles to light. The classroom lights are then turned off and the class sings "Happy Birthday" to the child in the dark. Lorraine describes that by turning out the lights, the children can better see the candles, it creates a mood and it increases the significance of this event, making it even more memorable for the children.

During the transition period after snack, the students sing the "(VIP's name)

Works With One Hammer" action song (See Appendix D). Here, the students eventually get their legs, arms and head all moving as they sing. This is done as an activity to release the stress from sitting for a while and it develops their gross motor skills.

In Lorraine's view, children grow in so many ways during the year. She likes to celebrate this growth and feels that it is important to acknowledge significant developments. When the students lose their first tooth, a certificate to celebrate this event goes home. The students are sung a silly song about having lost their tooth. They enjoy this funny little song and having the students sing to their peers increases their awareness of each other.

> We sing the loose tooth song because I think losing a tooth is a symbol of growth and for children it's very exciting they feel that they are growing up. And it just adds to the fun of kindergarten with a song that's catchy, it gives them one on one attention. They build some self-esteem at the same time. It just emphasizes the fact that we are growing up. And that's one of the stages of growing up is losing your teeth and getting new teeth. (June 23, 2004)

This silly song lightens this event that could be traumatic for some children while encouraging the students to anticipate their own tooth loss without anxiety.

Lorraine uses the *Jim Stone Animated Literacy Program* to teach the letters of the alphabet. Part of this program includes an action song for each letter of the alphabet that can be in conjunction with the letter of the week.

Lorraine's "Goodbye" song (see Appendix D) is in four languages – English, French, Japanese and Hebrew. Lorraine believes that it is important for students to be made aware of other languages, cultures, and countries around the world. By singing this

song, the students feel that they themselves have learned other languages.

> [The students] find it rather exciting to be singing words that they don't understand. And now they've learned a little bit about geography, about other countries, that other people speak other languages. And now they think that they can speak all these languages. (Laughter). It's just kind of fun for them to be exposed to other languages besides English in a context that is very familiar to them like goodbye. (June 23, 2004)

Lorraine also has taught her children chants, some of which are their favourite activities. On May 28, it had been a week since I had last heard them recite "Dinosaur, Dinosaur" (See Appendix D) and I was amazed at their performance. When it was announced that they would be doing this chant, the students became visibly excited. As they eagerly stood up, the students chatted amongst themselves about how they were looking forward to doing this activity. All the students willingly participated with their heart and soul. They were so expressive especially on the words "please oh please don't stomp on me" as they all folded their hands in prayer and some students raised their voice at a higher pitch. Lorraine used this chant to have the students practice their oral counting skills. At the end of the chant one student would be chosen to pick a number to which the students would stomp their feet. One day a student chose number 37 and suggested that the students should first count by 10 up to 30 then by one up to 37. They certainly impressed me with their learning and counting skills.

During my time in the class I was also treated to some singing and dancing. The students performed the "Noble Duke of York" that was danced in a manner similar to the "Virginia Reel". They also performed the "Chicken Dance" and the "Mexican Hat

Dance".

In gym class, the students sang the "Ants Go Marching One By One". For this activity, Lorraine chose 3 students as group leaders and as the song started they each had to choose the number of students required as the song suggests. If the ants were marching three by three then two other students had to be chosen. Most often the teacher would skip a number or two to make the students think a little harder at the number of students that needed to be added to their line. This wonderful activity not only enhanced the students' counting skills it also provided an opportunity for the students to develop their gross motor skills.

I asked Lorraine if she used instruments during class. She recounts that the students had the opportunity to beat a drum and do an Aboriginal dance prior to Thanksgiving and she indicates that the students enjoyed the opportunity to play an instrument. Lorraine admits that she knows she could use more instrumentation during class time. She has mostly limited the use of instruments for show case events such as the Christmas concert performance. She voiced a concern that the curriculum requires so many other activities that these effective sociological and teaching musical activities are severely marginalized.

The Students' Thoughts on Music in Their Classroom

What really excited me about this research was finding out how children felt and responded to music. I had gained some knowledge by watching them as they sung or chanted during class. However, in order to be more accurate with my data I needed to include the children's voices. Students and their involvement in the singing activities of

the classroom formed an important part of the context of the classroom and of the triadic relationship between teacher, students, and classroom experience. My intent was to informally ask the more verbal students how they felt about certain songs or chants. I was interested in finding out what their favourite songs or chants were, and more importantly, why. This was no easy feat, for children at that age have not all developed the ability to verbalize their thoughts as well as developed meta-cognitively. Most children could tell me what their favourite song or chant was but they could not tell me the reason why. In order to accomplish my goal of getting their thoughts, I had to become a participant observer. When the children were in centers I became their playmate. As the days passed, a bond started slowly forming. After a couple of weeks, the novelty of my presence wore off. This was evident the morning the class did not sing to me the "Hello" song. I was no longer a guest and more and more the students would come up to me and share their news.

According to (Berg, 1995) "individuals who appear to be more or less the central figures in a given network of inhabitants may be referred to as stars [and] whenever possible it is advisable to find and gain the confidence of a star as soon as possible after entering the field" (p.107). Matthew the tallest boy in the class with brown wavy hair and hazel eyes was the star of this site. He is an only child and it became evident how comfortable he was speaking with adults. He had opinions and ideas and was not afraid to share them with those around him. Numerous times during my observation, I witnessed Matthew making suggestions about different songs and how they should be done. One day, after the class had recited "Old King Cole", Matthew insisted that they do this rhyme once more, this time using props. The teacher agreed with Matthew and

quickly collected suitable props for the rhyme. This activity was then repeated twice more with different sets of students playing out the parts. It was evident that the students' eagerness and enjoyment increased with the use of the props because they continually requested that the activity be repeated. On another day, Lorraine was in the midst of teaching a Father's Day song entitled "I Love Father" (See Appendix D) when Matthew raised his hand and suggested that the last line should be altered from "I love you, I love you" to "I love you, yes I do". Lorraine thanked him for the idea but did not alter the song.

Matthew's favourite chant was "Dinosaur Dinosaur" because as he explained to me " it's about dinosaurs and **I love** dinosaurs" (C. June 4). At a later date Matthew informed me that "O Canada" is his favourite song. When I asked him why this was his favourite song he simply answered, "because it's about Canada" (C. June 17).

Matthew shared with me that the "Days of The Week" song was good because the kids got to choose their favourite day. In Matthew's opinion, singing "You Are Special" is a good song because "the kids get to sing to other kids – it makes me feel happy when I sing to others" (C. June 17). At an early age Matthew has already discovered some of the powers of singing – it makes all parties involved happy. I then asked how he felt about being sung to as well as singing the solo part in that song when he was the VIP child he answered "I like to sing by myself, it makes me happy. It makes me feel special to be sung to" (C. June 17). Here again he reaffirms that singing is a joyful activity that fosters a happy and positive attitude.

Matthew thinks that singing the "Hello" song in the morning "makes the parents feel good – my mom really likes it" (C. June 17). Again Matthew reaffirms that singing

to others is comforting and welcoming. I then asked Matthew what he thought makes a good kindergarten song, a **good** kindergarten song? He simply stated "the rhythm" (C. June 11). I thought that was a very insightful answer.

Sometimes information about the music that was happening in the room would come unexpectedly. One day as the children were being taught the "Mexican Hat Dance" a little girl danced past my chair and leaned over to tell me: "You know what? This is just really fun!" (C. June 2). It was obvious by her smile and her dancing that she was really enjoying herself. I was grateful that she was daring enough to share this information with me during the activity itself (C. June 2). This same little girl later informed me that she also likes doing the "Chicken Dance" - even more than the "Dinosaur" chant. She also wanted me to know that she does highland dancing (C. June 4). When I observed the children dancing, they were smiling, laughing and enjoying themselves. Clearly these children love to dance and move to music.

Matthew was able to really verbalize his thoughts on music and I would like to assume that these thoughts reflected those of his classmates. Unfortunately, Matthew's classmates were not as verbal as he was, and I found out that they were more interested in talking about their bikes, their toys or their pets than the songs in kindergarten. I would start with "What's your favourite song in kindergarten?" the student would answer immediately then follow his or her answer with "do you know what?" and we would be off on a tangent about toys, pets, events or family members. Keeping this in mind here is what other students in the class had to say about music.

Kathryn was a little blond girl who was already taking piano lessons. Her favourite song was "Bones" (See Appendix D). She liked this song "because I like the

actions" (C. June 4). It would seem that the kinds of actions that are chosen for songs are also important. They must appeal to the child, be at their level of physical development and be meaningful.

Roberta had a beautiful voice. One morning she sang the "Lost A Tooth" song (see Appendix D) to me. To my surprise, she admitted "I like to dance more than singing songs – my favourite dance is the "Chicken Dance". When I asked her why she simply answered "because" (C. June 4). Jewel piped up " I like the "Chicken Dance" because it's my very favourite!" (C. June 4). These children's statements show the diversity in children's preferences. It's okay to prefer dancing to singing.

Johanna's favourite song is "O Canada" "because I like the sound to it". She also liked the "Hello" song "because we can use our body with it – we use our body and get our arms moving like you're drumming – I really like to do that. (As she said this she started to cross clap on her lap. I commented on how well she could cross clap and she responded "That's why we do it every day so we can practice and get good at it. (C. June 4). From her point of view, the combination of music and movement is highly desirable. In her practicing of this she is improving not only her rhythmic abilities but also her gross motor skills.

Montgomery likes to sing the "Months Of The Year" song because "it has all the months" and the Days Of The Week song because "it has all the days". He also liked the "Hammer" song because "you move everything – your legs and your arms". Here, Montgomery reaffirms that a combination of music and movements is very appealing. Ethan's favourite chant is Dinosaur "because it's fun". When I asked him what makes it fun he replied: "I can't say" (C. June 4). It is evident that according Ethan it's important

to enjoy yourself when you are learning.

Eliciting the children's responses in respect to music was very challenging. Their inability to verbalize their thoughts made it difficult to narrow down the reasons why they enjoyed a certain activity or song. Meta-cognitive and verbal skills are not fully developed yet for many of the kindergarten students. Perhaps, this is why Ellis (2000) recommends that students under 10 years old not be interviewed. I did not formally interview any of the children, rather I tried to question the children on an informal basis in the course of classroom interactions. This happened usually in the morning before class started, during centre time and even snack time. It was important for me to try to overcome this barrier and I was pretty sure that I could succeed and felt that it was worth a try.

Pedagogical Practice

It is Lorraine's intention to teach literacy, numeracy, social and cultural content through the use of music. Kindergarten, students are expected to develop basic vocabulary awareness about their environment so vocabulary about the weather, the months, days of the week, and colours is important. Also, they learn their letters and sounds, how to count and the meaning of numbers. Because the curriculum demands have increased, Lorraine finds that it is important to use music to lighten the learning process thus making it more enjoyable for the students. She believes that music eases the learning process and helps make the learning of abstract concepts more concrete. By doing action songs, the students become more engaged as active participants in their learning, and have the opportunity to involve many more of their senses. As stated

earlier "everything that gets into the brain enters through the senses [and] because of this, it is important that children use their ears, eyes and hands so that the brain learns to be receptive" (Newman, 1998, p.23).

Lorraine believed that singing enhances children's experiences as they pursue literacy skill development. In kindergarten, developing phonemic awareness is an important pre-reading activity. Lorraine used music to address phonemic awareness on a quotidian basis. For example, by singing "Fee, Fie Fiddleio" a song highlighting the initial consonant of the name of the VIP student, the whole class was exposed to, and became aware of, different initial consonants. This song was repeated on a daily basis and its familiar structure with the specific but predictable first letter being changed, enable the children to learn what an initial consonant is about. The students looked forward to singing the song every day, especially the VIP child, as it highlighted the first letter in his or her name. A difficult literacy concept was being taught in a light and enjoyable manner.

In Lorraine's class, music is a teaching tool being used strategically in the process of teaching content. The students learned the days of the week and the months of the year by singing them daily. As mentioned earlier, students respond to the "Months of The Year" song by standing at the beginning for the song, and as they sing the names of the months, the children are called upon to sit back down on their spot when they hear their birthday month being sung. This activity creates a situation where each student is made to feel special for a moment and the song helps the students better understand how their birthday fit into the whole of the year thus making new time and calendar connections for the students. Time is an abstract concept that is difficult for young

children to grasp. As Burton and Edge (1985) explain, the concept of time develops slowly in children's mind and it is important for teachers to offer their students many opportunities, activities and experiences that demonstrate the passage of time in order for them to develop this concept. Therefore, the singing of the "Months Of The Year" represents an activity that assists the students to relate time and dates to other events in their daily lives more meaningfully. By singing this song everyday, it enabled the students to construct and develop this concept.

While certain aspects of some songs, such as the wide range of notes and intervals, would be considered problematic from a music specialist's perspective, from an early childhood perspective, there are other aspects of these songs that can be seen as contributing to developmentally appropriate practice. The students were taught in a manner that was enjoyable. The repetition that students require to construct knowledge was enriched through music, making this process pleasurable and even refreshing. The use of songs increased students' engagement and transformed them into active learners which is developmentally appropriate.

Classroom Management

From my observations and conversations with the teacher it became clear that Lorraine uses music to facilitate classroom management since she has found that music increases students' focus on the current lesson being taught. By having the children crossclap their hands on their lap during the "Hello" song, they become active participants as they coordinate the use of their voices and hands in sounds and rhythms. The process of this activity adds another dimension to their learning experience – the

benefits of team work in a common project. As active participants in the song and actions, the students became engaged and their time is focused on their learning experiences. When children come to school, the room is full of energetic little people expecting to be given directions by their teacher. I noticed that this song assisted both the teacher and the students to bring focus and cohesiveness to the class and, in effect, facilitated the general management of the class.

Other action songs provided students with opportunities to unwind at other points at which it was becoming difficult for kindergarten children to sustain attention for long periods of time. For example, during circle time when the teacher observed that the students were becoming restless she would ask them to stand and join her in a song or chant that usually included some body movements.

Lorraine uses music during transition periods to help students work toward a common goal. In any given activity, some children will complete the activity more quickly than others and Lorraine engages the group in a singing activity to occupy the students who have completed the task while giving time to those needing a little longer to finish their work. In another instance, as the students were finishing their snacks and returning to the carpet area, they would begin singing "Johnny Hits With One Hammer" which requires the students to move their arms, legs, and head. This song occupies the group while some students finished their snack. This song helped smooth out this change of activity while signaling to those still eating that they were expected to be on the rug by the time the song ended.

Routine

It is certainly my experience that kindergarten students thrive on routine and music plays a signalling role in the routine of the classroom that helps establish the beginning, middle and end of the class. Lorraine has integrated music throughout the morning as part of the daily routine in which students expect to sing the same core of eight songs on a daily basis. These songs also help the students predict the next activity. For example, the singing of "O Canada" alerts the students that the school day has now started. Through routine, the students have become aware that the content of the lesson are not routine but changes on a daily basis. As Berliner (1986) explains, "routines often allow students and teachers to devote their attention to other, perhaps more important matters inherent in the lesson" (p.5).

The Teacher's Attunement / Rhythm of the Classroom

Music influences the rhythms of the classroom. The eight core songs that are sung every day have been strategically scheduled to suit and enhance the children's energy levels. Most songs are geared to release students' energy and help them become more focused. Three of the eight songs require the children to sing and move. Music is used to give the students an opportunity to dispense of their restlessness joyously after sitting for a period of time. One day, during whole group instruction, the students were restless so Lorraine stopped her lesson and had all the students stand up. She then had the students join her in an action poem that required four different body poses. She started slowly then increased the speed of the poem. The students really enjoyed doing this activity especially as the pace increased. After this impromptu

activity the children had released some energy and were now ready to sit and focus on the lesson. The rhythm of the classroom relaxed and the students were back on task. Like a pendulum, this activity produced both an ebb and a flow of rhythm in the classroom. The rhythm of the classroom is influenced by both the students themselves and by the teacher's attunement to her students' needs. This was made evident on many occasions and thus brought about many impromptu activities.

Beyond the Curriculum

There are many curriculums that are present in any given classroom. The more familiar one is the set curriculum or the curriculum-as-plan that is a written document developed by the Ministry of Education or the school district office. As Aoki (2004) explains, curriculum-as-plan is "an abstraction yearning to come alive in the presence of teacher and students" (p.231). The other less familiar curriculum is known as the curriculum-as-lived-experiences. According to Aoki (1991), the curriculum-as-lived-experiences is, "situated face-to-face with students, each unique in their own way and each living out a story of what it is to live school life" (p. 7). In Lorraine's class, music influences the lived-curriculum and through the use of music she manages to teach things beyond the curriculum. The teacher's attunement to her students is very much part of the lived-curriculum. The lived-curriculum includes "teachable moments" where the teacher reacts to what is happening in the classroom and uses this moment as an opportunity to teach. Lorraine is not afraid to go with the flow, or to follow a tangent on a different educational journey with her students when the appropriate opportunity occurs. As Woods and Jeffrey (1996) explain, "artistic teaching takes risks and potentially breaks

rules" (p.5).

Teachable Moments

One occasion when music was used to enhance a teachable moment was during snack time. In this kindergarten class snack is prepared daily by a designated parent and on this day the designated parent had made some sandwiches for the class. While the students were eating, the teacher noticed that many children were not eating the crust and she immediately started singing "The Crust", a song about a bread crust that had not been eaten by a child. (See Appendix D) The children were so enthralled by the song that they all stopped eating and were quiet and focused on the story that unfolded through song. Here was a teachable moment - the lived curriculum alive and well! Lorraine had successfully pointed out a concern to her students in a non-reproachful manner. Although the children still left their crust uneaten, I'm sure they went home and talked about the song of the crust that had wanted to be eaten. The seed had been planted. Perhaps the next time the children ate a sandwich they would remember the song and try a bite of crust. A lesson had been taught in a very different and entertaining way. As Woods and Jeffrey (1996) explain "teaching is an act of faith, which requires, for many, strong investment of the self" (p. 7). Lorraine had shared a song with her students that her mother had sung to her when she was little girl. This is evidence of a strong investment of the self and of her life long experience. An act of faith means to teach in a non-directive manner. It is making a suggestion rather than stating a directive while faith is in the children's ability to take advice in an oblique manner. As stated earlier, it is important that students be empowered to take initiative, to think for themselves and be

more responsible for their learning without a great deal of direction on the part of the teacher (Peterson, 1992; Upitis, 1990).

A Caring Environment

Caring relationships between the teacher and her students as well as amongst the students themselves is highly visible in this site. Loraine has worked very hard to establish this in her class. It is evident by the way she relates to each student how well she has come to know them and their individual strengths, interests, background and learning needs. It is because of Lorraine's attuned awareness of each child that she is able to continually bring out the best in her students thus building their sense of worth. A genuine reciprocal bond between the teacher and students was evident through the many hugs that were given during a kindergarten day and in the manner that students and teacher interacted with each other.

There was also a goldfish in the classroom that required daily feeding, a responsibility that was performed by the VIP student. The goldfish not only helped the students learn how important it was to care for another living creature, it also instilled in them a care for the environment. Having a pet in the classroom also contributed to making the classroom a more pleasant and inviting place. Since kindergarten represents for many students the beginning of going to school it is important to make the transition from home to school as comfortable as possible. It is the establishment of a safe and caring environment that helps students to take risks. Singing can be a risk-taking situation for some learners but in an environment where they feel welcomed and comfortable students are more willing to attempt new and unfamiliar activities.

It was evident that students genuinely cared for each other. Lorraine has provided many opportunities to develop caring amongst students through songs. Basic social skills such as welcoming, greeting guests, and knowing how to address adults were learned through the "Hello" song. Songs also increase students' awareness of each other when accomplishments and milestones are brought forth and celebrated on a daily basis. As Matthew stated earlier, it is important to sing to our friends.

"You Are Special" and "Goodbye" songs promote social skills amongst peers as well as a sense of belonging. When students sing "You Are Special" to the child of the day it is an opportunity to tell this individual how his or her presence in the group is validated. It is also a way to tell this individual that he or she is accepted in the group and is loved.

When singing the "Goodbye" song, the students are learning to express closure, a gesture that is extended when people part. As Peterson (1992) explains the intent of incorporating a ceremony at the end of the day establishes a feeling of completeness before the students return home to their everyday life beyond the classroom walls. Baumeister and Leary (1995) observe that the continuation of one's relationship with another person is assured through social rituals involving greetings and farewells as greetings directed at close friends seem designed to indicate that one's relationship has remained intact since the last contact, and farewells include some hint that the relationship will be maintained until the next time that they see each other.

As Brown and Brown (1997) confirm, music "helps build self-esteem and create a sense of inclusion and collaboration" (p. 351) and I certainly observed this to be when VIP students sing their solo in the "You Are Special" song. It is evident that the students

feel comfortable enough to take risks in front of their peers. Lorraine has provided for her students an environment where students can grow and blossom.

Singing as a group helps create a bond thus bringing the class closer together. Singing together toward a goal whether it be to bolster a student's self confidence, to make a student feel accepted as part of the group or to welcome outsiders, enhances the group as a caring community. As part of caring community of learners it is important to celebrate achievement and growth. The students learned to do this through songs such as the rituals of the birthday song and the "Lost a Tooth" song that teach students the importance of celebrating milestones. Rituals and traditions are part of communities and they help build and enhance the caring part of a community. As Peterson (1992) states, rituals are made up "of symbolic acts that ground family and community life" (p.20). Lorraine has worked hard to create some rituals and tradition that enhance the community of learners in her class. Singing the birthday song with the lights turned off was a tradition in the class that I'm sure will long live in the students' hearts.

By creating a community of learners in her classroom Lorraine tried to make learning for her students more meaningful by connecting content to real life. Some songs such as "O Canada" promote students awareness that they are part of and belong to a bigger community outside the classroom and by learning to sing the Canadian anthem, students become part of this community. Lorraine is confident that it develops students' pride for their country, pride in being a Canadian citizen and in belonging to a larger community. Through this process of providing connections to real life for students the curriculum became more holistic in nature. As well, in the process of trying to teach the students the concept of months in a year, Lorraine made an important connection by

using the students' birthdays. The concepts of months became more meaningful and real to students because of the birthday link. The idea of the "whole child" is central to the concept of holism and singing, and particularly singing action songs, provides children with the opportunity to develop all of their domains simultaneously as singing involves body, mind and soul.

Theorists and Music

As mentioned in Chapter One, Bresler (1995) has indicated four ways in which music can be integrated into a classroom: subservient, co-equal, affective and social and most classroom would reflect a combination of two or more styles rather than present itself in a single pure form. In Lorraine's classroom a combination of subservient and social styles of music integration were present. The subservient style of music integration manifested itself as Lorraine used music to enhance the teaching and learning process in her room. The social style of music integration was present throughout the day when the children came together and celebrated through song. Lorraine used music as a tool to build her caring community of learners. Learning through social experiences was very much a key element in this classroom that reflects Vygotsky's constructivist theory. As mentioned earlier, Vygotsky theorized that learning occurred in a social setting and by having her students sing as a group enhanced the social setting in which learning occurred. Music was influential in the process of scaffolding her students learning at their zone of proximal development. For example, as she explained to me, very few students knew the days of the week when they came into kindergarten and by daily singing "The Days of the Week" song the students eventually learned to master this skill.

As Vygotsky observed, learning leads development. As the year progressed the students mastered many more skills that contributed to a better understanding of their world. As Brown and Brown (1997) state music "can impart valuable concepts to students, which they can connect and apply to existing knowledge" (p. 351).

Summary

As mentioned earlier, Lorraine integrated music into her kindergarten program in a subservient and social manner. In this site, the use of songs, chants and rhymes were used to enhance the process of teaching content and literacy skills into a more enjoyable activity where all participants became active learners. The singing of the same songs on a daily basis enabled students to remember valuable information and to recognize the various relationships between concepts. Along with developing the students' gross motor skills, action songs made the learning activities more holistic as students used many of their senses, their body and their mind in the process. These vocal activities helped transform learning processes into a social activity as it not only increase student participation but also the interaction amongst the students. The teacher used music to respond to her students needs when it came to releasing some of their energy. Songs were used to ameliorate teachable moments and during transition periods music helped segue the students from one activity to the next. Singing activities were woven throughout the day to help the students know the routine. Songs developed the students' social skills as they learned to welcome guests in their room as well as how to address them in a polite and respectful manner. Songs increased in students an awareness of each other and enhanced bonding amongst the students. Songs also helped students build

confidence, self-esteem and a sense of self-worth. Through the use of songs, the class celebrated milestones, achievement and student growth while creating traditions. Singing contributed in creating a caring community of learners as well as promoted a sense of belonging. Many activities in the classroom were transformed into developmentally appropriate ones because of the use of music.

All seven attributes of DAP mentioned in Chapter Two can be seen in the activities in which music was interwoven. Firstly, it was evident that this classroom represented a safe and caring environment. Many of the activities helped students build on prior knowledge. Songs became part of the classroom routine that included daily repetitions of activities to help students learn content, moving them through the cycle of awareness, exploration, inquiry and utilization. Singing also increased interaction amongst the students themselves and between the teacher and the students. Singing brought playfulness to the teaching and learning, which increased motivation and interest and participation in students. Singing became part of the variety of activities and learning experiences that the teacher offered her students in order to benefit their individual learning journey. All in all, in this site, music enhanced the classroom atmosphere making kindergarten a pleasant and joyful place.

CASE STUDY TWO

The School

It is a beautiful May afternoon as I drive down the windy road of this quiet neighborhood. Flowering plum and apple trees, a popular choice amongst the property owners in this quiet well-established residential area are in full bloom. As I come around one final bend, the road straightens and the brown-bricked school comes into view. It is located at the northwest corner of an intersection. It is evident that parking is a problem as the streets surrounding the school are filled with parked cars. I later found out that even some of the staff must park on the street. I usually park half a block away from the hubbub and enjoy my walk to the school.

The school is as old as the neighborhood itself and was originally built in 1961. There are 485 students from kindergarten to grade 6. Its student population reflects that of the hamlet primarily white middle class with bit of ethnic diversity.

The Kindergarten Room

The kindergarten room is located in the lower level of the school. The classroom is quite small but it is well organized and the space is used effectively. The large window made it evident that you were in a basement at eye-level with the school ground. As I walk into the room I see the L-shaped work area consisting of four pods containing two rectangular tables put together to seat eight children. The wall near the work area consists of cupboards with doors where we find each student's pictures with a hook and a leaf made of construction paper. These leaves with students' names

help take attendance, as each child is responsible to take his or her leaf and hang it on the tree that is located by the door. Leaves that are left on the wall indicate the absent students. There is also a sink as well as a bathroom in the corner of the room. In the next corner, we find the water centre, the playdough centre as well as the house centre. Shelves in the middle of the room separate the work area and playdough centre from the circle area. The circle area has a rug on the floor and is surrounded by a shelf for the blocks, a book nook or reading corner, and the pocket chart that the teacher uses to hang a story or a poem that the students will read as a group. On the other side of this stand, students insert their cards indicating the centers that they will attend that day. In the corner there is an easel or big bookstand as well as a long and narrow table that the teacher uses to sit on sometimes. There are also two Dell computers in the room that are part of the technology center. By the entrance is a closet as well as a filing cabinet. There is no teacher desk. (See figure B)

The Students

The enrolment of this class consists of 9 boys and 9 girls. The students are very well supported as this class has a general educational assistant. There are two students with special needs who are each supported with an aide. While approximately half the students live within walking distance from the school, the rest of the students live in a newer section of town and use the school bus to get to school. The students in the class are primarily white and middle class. Out of the 18 students, one student is of Chinese descent, one of Mexican descent, one of East Indian descent, and one of Australian descent. I found this group to be very quiet, reserved and very well behaved. I observed

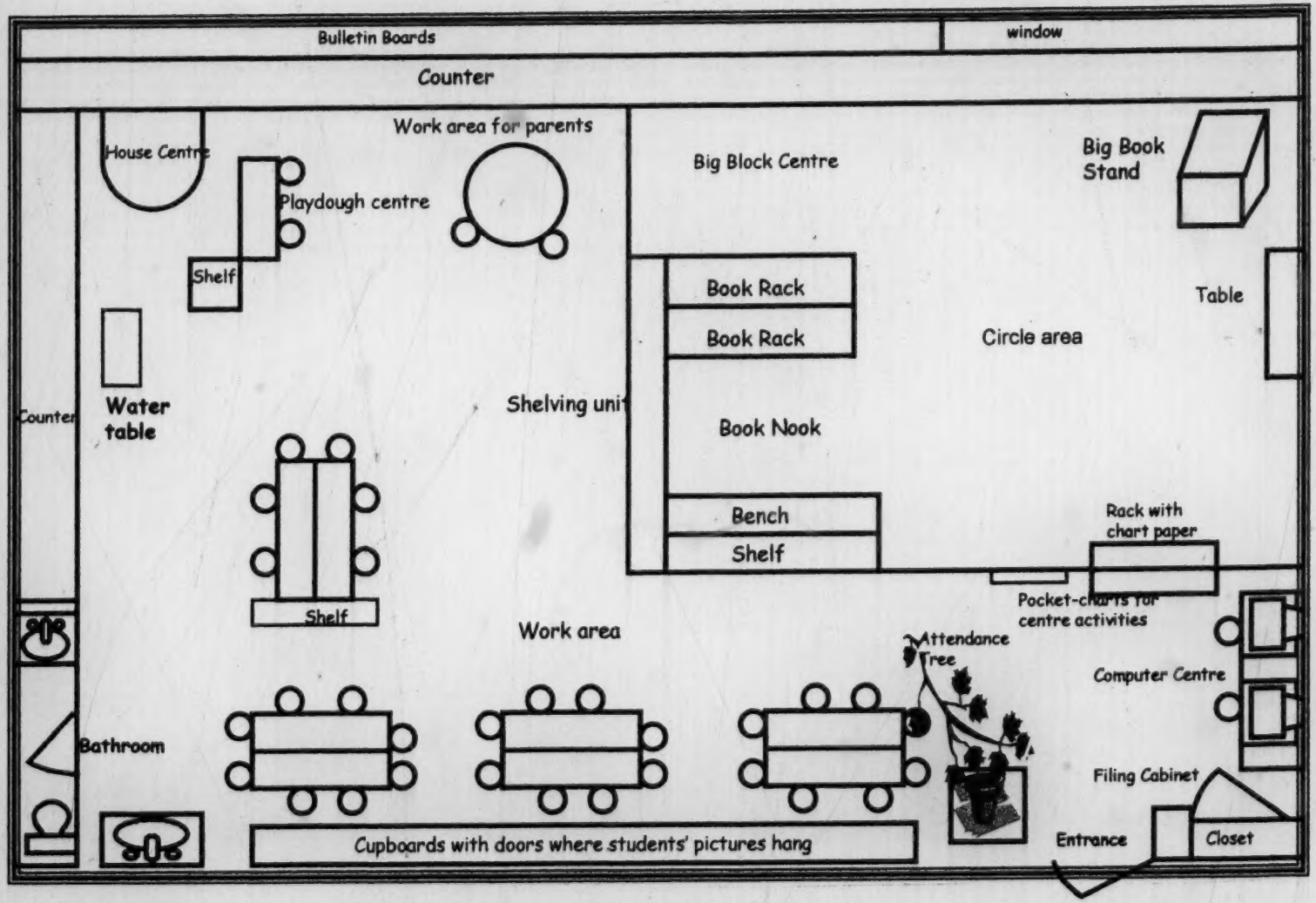
Bulletin Boards
window
Counter
House Centre
Work area for parents
Playdough centre
Shelf
Big Block Centre
Big Book Stand
Book Rack
Book Rack
Table
Circle area
Water table
Shelving unit
Book Nook
Bench
Shelf
Rack with chart paper
Pocket-charts for centre activities
Shelf
Work area
Attendance Tree
Computer Centre
Bathroom
Filing Cabinet
Cupboards with doors where students' pictures hang
Entrance
Closet

FIGURE B

this site in the afternoon and in the months of May and June the room would get quite warm. Consequently I often found the children to be lethargic or low on energy. The kindergarten students attend a five half-day afternoon program. On Tuesdays, during the months of May and June the students walked to the local indoor public pool for swimming lessons. My observation days never included Tuesdays.

A Typical Day in Kindergarten

It is 12:42 p.m. and the students are slowly arriving. Some students arrive by bus, others by vehicle while others walk to school with a caregiver. The student's first job is to place their leaf on the tree to indicate that they are present. Following this, they must exchange their books for the home reading program as well as choose the centres that they will be attending on that particular day. They indicate their choice by inserting a card with their name in a pocket chart by the picture of the desired centre. By 12:50 p.m. most students are sitting on the rug and the teacher begins the class by singing "Come and Join Our Circle". It is during this song that the students and teacher greet all their peers by singing each other's name as part of the song as well as all adult guests and educational assistants in the room. Opening circle where whole group instruction occurs, lasts about 30 minutes. During this time, the special child of the day, or as he or she is referred to The Dynamite Kid has the opportunity to practice his or her leadership skills by assisting the teacher with the calendar. This student gets to choose other students who will come up and complete certain tasks. For the calendar activity, children are chosen to come up and choose flash cards to be inserted at the proper spot, under the words **yesterday**, **today** and **tomorrow** that the teacher has displayed on the board. The teacher

uses this as a literacy activity. All the days are written on flash cards and the students must chose the right days amongst three flash cards that the teacher presents to the child. The students have the opportunity to use a pointer to help track the words as the class reads. These pointers were made by a parent and reflect the themes of the month. For example, for the bug theme, there was a ladybug pointer and then a dolphin pointer for the under the sea unit. During the weather activity that follows, the Dynamite Kid is expected to tell the class two appropriate weather adjectives for that day. They are then inserted into the "Weather Song" (see Appendix E). As well, the Dynamite Kid is responsible for sharing with the class a creative way of rhythm clapping that the class will do as they sing the song. The student first demonstrates the rhythm clap before leading the class in clapping and sing of the "Weather Song". After the weather activity is done, there is the "Mystery Bucket". For this, the Dynamite Kid has had the opportunity to take an ice-cream bucket home the night before and put something special inside the bucket for students to identify by guessing in class. The student then gives the class some clues such as the first letter in the name of the object and it's colour or some specific characteristic. Once the students have guessed correctly they are given an opportunity to practice asking questions. For example, some students asked questions such as, "Where did you get the it? Who gave you the item? How does it work"? This is a great activity to help kindergarten children arouse their curiosity and learn how to ask relevant questions. My personal observation as a kindergarten teacher is that kindergarten students, need to practice asking questions related to the discussion at hand. When a topic is being discussed and kindergarten children are asked whether they have questions, they respond with a personal experience in the form of a statement. It takes

them practice to master the art of asking questions related to a specific topic.

The next activity is "What's Your News?" For this activity the Dynamite Kid must be able to dictate a complete sentence to the teacher. The teacher writes the message with the help of the class. Some of the students know how to spell many of the high frequency words. Once the message has been written, the students are encouraged to do some "letter-looking". Here, the teacher chooses letters found in the message and the students sing about these letters and their sounds as the letters are circled. When the Dynamite Kid has completed what is required of him or her, the class applauds this student to show what a fine job he or she has done. The circle usually ends with the students marching and handclapping to "Merry Merry Day" a song played on the tape player (see Appendix E). At approximately 1:15 p.m. the students move on to their various learning centres.

It is during centre time, activities that the general aide assists Jane by being in charge of all the crafts for the year. The craft centre can be attended by the students up to three times every week. There are certain crafts that all students are required to do as well as some that are optional which is particularly satisfying to the students who love doing art. For Father's Day, the children painted a bookmark in the Impressionist style and on the backside they wrote a sentence stating why they like their father. Two walls of bulletin board are dedicated to children's art. Each child has a space on the "Art Gallery" wall to display their work that coincides with the monthly themes. For example, for the "Under The Sea" theme the children were given a blue construction paper on which they glued some sand on the bottom and narrow green paper streamers to represent weeds. They then sponge-painted some fish in their scene. The educational aide also

helps organize parental help and all the various books that the students work on during the year including the craft alphabet book, the poem book and the alphabet book. Each of these books represents a whole year's work and they are wonderful keepsakes.

Jane is usually in charge of the literacy centre where students practice their printing or writing skills. Other learning centres include: a numeracy centre where students practice printing numbers, the computer centre where the students play educational games that promote math skills or literacy skill, as well a blocks, puzzles and playdough centres.

At 2:00 p.m., the students go outside for recess. Students are expected to have their snack during recess, as an allotted time in class is no longer given. On some days, I also observed some students celebrating their un-birthday, meaning that their birthday fell in July or August and would not get to be celebrated during the regular kindergarten year. This is done during recess by a park bench. The teacher lights a candle on a cupcake and "Happy Birthday" is sung to the child. Once they return from recess, the students continue attending the various centres. At approximately 2:45p.m. Jane sings "It's Tidy Up Time" (See Appendix E) and then plays an instrumental musical piece on the C.D. player while the students clean up. It is at this point that the students regroup for closing circle that lasts between 15 to 30 minutes. The students who take the school bus are dismissed at 3:15 p.m. while the other student continue to sing or listen to a story until the bell rings at 3:21p.m.

Jane's Story

"I come from a long line of kindergarten teachers. My mom taught kindergarten at the Ringhouse[2], at the University, when she did her Masters' Degree. And I grew up going in and helping on the weekends and getting things ready" (I. May 30). It is evident that having the opportunity to help her mother on the weekends when she was a teenager, probably influenced her career choice. Jane explained that her undergraduate work was in Early Childhood Education and a lot of that time was spent at the Ringhouse. She has been teaching for approximately eight years. She started her teaching career in southern Alberta in a little town just outside of Lethbridge, where she taught five years in grade three then one year in grade one. She then went on maternity leave before moving to her current position two years ago.

She has a keen interest in early literacy and has pursued graduate work on this issue, producing an award-winning thesis. Consequently, her kindergarten program focuses on literacy. She loves to write and has composed many poems and raps for her kindergarten class. She is proud to say that most of her students go on to grade one as readers.

Jane had some piano lessons as a child and also played flute in junior high and high school. She admits that she has forgotten a lot about music notation.

> I enjoy music! I love music! I'm just not .... It's not a natural thing for me to be musical I don't think" "My brother's very musical. He plays guitar every night for relaxation. He comes home from work, turns on the news with the sound off and plays guitar. (I. May 30)

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[2] Ringhouse 3 where the kindergarten program is located is part of the Child Study Center at the University of Alberta. This facility is used as a lab setting for the kindergarten program.

Jane considers her brother to be more musically inclined then she is and she admires his ability to play the guitar. She appreciates that music can be a relaxing outlet as well as an asset to her teaching.

> I think that something that I would love to do is learn how to play guitar because I think that would just round me out completely and I would be able to really utilize that in a classroom. We have an excellent music teacher in our school who's an unbelievable guitar player and she keeps saying she's going to teach me so maybe one of these days I'll actually…. I have a guitar even. (I. May 30)

Jane is obviously aware of how her kindergarten class could be improved and she has a guitar and colleague who is willing to teach her. However, pursuing this dream would mean time and commitment. Jane seems to be a person who will only undertake a task if she sincerely believes that she can follow it through to its completion and be successful. She recognizes the limitations of music education in her pre-service program. She also acknowledges life can be come very busy and that one must choose the activities that will be pursued. When asked to comment about the music classes in her teacher education program she responded:

> My music class at U. of A., I thought, was very good. But it's just like…it's just being an undergraduate and taking one course in language learning. You don't know much about language learning if you've had one undergraduate course so you have to go back and do more. And you know where's the time to do it if you're already kind of like…..? With me, I'm hooked on the whole reading part of learning so I haven't pursued anymore musically. You have to choose you battles. (I. May 30)

Jane is blessed with a beautiful light soprano voice that has helped her students to sing lightly in their head voice. "I don't play an instrument so I use my CD player a lot…or my tape player, or we just sing" (I. May 30). Even though she feels that her musical knowledge is limited she doesn't let this become a handicap but finds a way to cope. Aside from relying on her CD player, she uses her strength as a writer, composing poems and raps for the children's enjoyment and learning. One day, Jane shared with me a dinosaur rap that she had composed for the students as well as an alphabet rap that is used as the cover of an alphabet book that the students compile throughout the year.

How the Teacher Uses Music

Jane starts her day by singing the "Come and Join Our Circle" song. Part of the song acknowledges all the students and adults in the room. She feels that this is an important song, for it allows her to at least acknowledge each of her students once during the day and it has also helped her students learn one another's name. This is followed the "Weather Song". The special child of the day or "Dynamite Kid" describes the weather with two adjectives for example sunny and warm. The child then chooses a rhythm clap for the whole class to do as they sing. As Jane explains,

> When we do our "Weather Song", the children get to choose a rhythm they use when they are clapping and I guess… it gives them ownership to try and be part of the person who is conducting learning that's why I let them pick…. Because it gives us a lot of variety, creativity on their part and they seem to enjoy having that freedom. (I. June 13)

By letting the children demonstrate the rhythm that is to be produce the teacher not only promotes leadership skills in her students but also encourages their creativity, thus promoting or building a community of learners. Jane also believes that children "like rhythm, they like to groove and need to do something with their hands" (I. May 30). She noted that the one thing that she has used from the pre-service music class is "how to integrate rhythmical things into the classroom" (I. June 13). Jane believes that hand clapping help students learn beat and rhythm. She further goes on to say: " I think that if they can repeat clapping patterns and things like that, it helps them out also as they are learning how to read to put together the syllables and rhythm of reading " (I. June 13). As Brown and Brown (1997) explain "a feel for the rhythm of the music improves reading skills and encourages greater appreciation of poetry and rhythmic prose" (p. 352). Part of circle time also includes literacy instruction. During this activity, The Dynamite Kid shares with the class a piece of news to be written out. All of the students participate in an activity that involves "letter -looking" and the circling of specific letters that the teacher has targeted. Once the teacher has chosen a letter, the class sings about it and its sound while one chosen student finds and circles that letter in the message. This alphabet song is done to the tune of "Skip to My Lou" (see Appendix E).

Following this activity, the students perform the "Merry, Merry Day" song (see Appendix E). For this music activity, the teacher plays a tape to which the students march and handclap with other students. Afterwards, the students attend the various educational centres. As centre time comes to an end, Jane begins to sing the "It's Tidy Up Time" song (see Appendix E) signalling that centres are over and the children must clean up. To focus their activity and define the time allowed for tidying, she plays a CD

with an instrumental guitar piece. Jane explains how she sometimes uses music "as a soother."

> In terms of when we are tidying up, there's a song I like to put on for them that's a very nice quiet song with guitar playing. It just reminds the children that as we are cleaning up let's not be really wild and try and be nice and calm and get the room organized and quiet as you go without having me to say Be quiet! Be quiet! (I. May 30)

According to Jane, the song helps the students work quietly with minimal redirection required from her. I noticed that for the duration of the piece, the students were encouraged to sit on the rug quietly and close their eyes once they had finished tidying up. One student that caught my attention was the student with special needs who always started dancing to the music. He couldn't sit still. His style was that of a ballet dancer who's beautiful arm movements and graceful body movements reflected the music being played. I was determined to find out more about this child.

Often during closing circle the class would sing a song that was related to the theme of the month. In May, they were working on The "Itsy Bitsy Spider" and in June they learnt a song that was on a cassette tape entitled "The Beach" (See Appendix E). This song had a catchy tune and the students had actions to go with it. They really enjoyed performing this song at the end of the day and they would be disappointed if time ran out and they had not had the opportunity to sing the song. Jane had a simple goodbye song "It's Time To Say Goodbye" (see Appendix E), although sometimes class would end before the song had been sung. The students taking the bus were always dismissed between 5 and 7 minutes before the rest of the class. While the general aide supervised

these students and escorted them to their bus at the end of the day, Jane would use these last few minutes to read a story or have students talk about their plans for the evening or the weekend.

The Students' Thoughts on Music in Their Classroom

Regardless of the observations of teachers and researchers, it was important for the students' voice to be heard as well. When I questioned the students about their choice of favourite song, their responses enhanced my understanding of how children perceived what was occurring in the classroom. When Victor was asked about his favourite song he responded that it was "Merry, Merry Day" because "It makes me feel happy" (C. June 4). Another song that was his favourite was "The Beach" song (see Appendix E) because it was really funny. When I ask what was funny about it, he sang "Look for shells oo-ah" with actions and continued singing "put your feet in the warm hot sand" while moving his toes from side to side as it is done when it is performed as a group (C. June 4).

Marcus and Clark both shared with me that the Beach Song was their favourite. They also thought that the part "Look for shells oo-ah" was funny (C. June 4). It would seem that songs that are humorous or silly in nature are appealing to children. Another day, I asked Clark "What makes a good kindergarten song a **good** kindergarten song?" he simply responded, "if it's very funny" (C. June 12). Clark has the reputation of being the smartest boy in the class and is already reading at a Grade 2 level.

Conrad is the student with special needs who caught my attention during the clean up instrumental song and he clearly loves music and loves to dance. After cleaning up the teacher would encourage the students to sit quietly, close their eyes, and listen to the

music. However, Conrad insisted on dancing when he heard the piece. He could not help himself. It was as though he was transported into another world. The classroom seemed to dissipate before him and transform itself into a dance studio or a stage. He was in his glory, in his own little world oblivious to his surroundings and his classmates. This was his moment! What surprised me was the level at which he was responding to the music. He could really feel the music in his body. The music seemed to be very soothing to him. His beautiful arm movements and ballet-like dance moves went along with the melodic and rhythmic lines. When I asked him how the music made him feel, he simply replied: "It makes me feel fine". Here is what else he had to say.

MBW: How do you feel when you are dancing?
C: It makes me feel good.
MBW: How do you know what moves to do when you hear the music?
C: I just do. That was the quiet dance. Mommy has nice music like that at home. If I do another dance I'll be sleepy.
MBW: Does it help you get to sleep?
C.: It helps me get to sleep.
MBW: Does mommy play a quiet song at home?
C. Mommy plays it at bedtime. My dad dances with me. Sometimes I dance with my sister and mommy.
MBW: What do you like best – dancing or singing?
C: Dancing is better than singing. When I dance, it's the quiet dance. (C. June 6)

Clearly music is an important part of Conrad's life. It is part of his home experience and it is clearly very important to him at school. I asked him if he took dance lessons and he said he didn't. This child has a great talent that I hope in the future he will continue to develop.

As mentioned earlier it was my intention to give the students a voice in this study. However, in this site, finding time to have informal conversations with the children was quite challenging. The way the program was designed, how the day unfolded, the small room, the small class size with already four adults, were all elements that contributed to

the challenge of talking to the children. I am pleased that I was able to capture Conrad's voice. Music affects children in different ways and for Conrad, music is his outlet through which to feel and communicate. His words were important – he needed to be heard.

Pedagogical Practice

The main focus in Jane's program is literacy and she uses music, chants and poetry to enhance her student's learning in this area. Here, method and process is just as important as content and structure. Jane has specially selected the tune "Skip To My Lou" to teach her students the letters of the alphabet and their sounds. By incorporating the singing, it improves this literacy activity that some young students might find difficult to maintain focus and attention. The students learn about the different letters and sounds in a joyful way by singing on a daily basis. While the class is singing about a specific letter, one student is chosen to locate and circle that letter in the message of the day. Everyone has a part to play - all the students are engaged and are active participants. This has become a whole language activity, as the letters are not taught in an isolated manner but in context. Through the message of the day, the students can see how letters fit into words and into a sentence making this literacy activity more meaningful for the children. According to Renegar (1990), "predictable songs are a rich resource for beginning reading activities from which multiple benefits accrue" (p. 37). She further explains that through singing, students can express themselves, become active participants and have the opportunity to acquire sight words that in turn, may develop positive feelings about reading.

The music captures and maintains students' attention and capacity to focus and hence the overall activity becomes more developmentally appropriate. By integrating music in this activity, it provides excitement for learning in children as well as an element of fun. As Brown and Brown (1997) explain, music makes learning easier for "it allows the listener to acquire and transfer information kinaesthetically and concretely" (p. 351). Jane had taught her students an action for each letter of the alphabet. As they sang this song, not only did movements help students make more connections, it helped make the letter-learning process more meaningful and concrete for the students.

Jane also used music to enhance the mood of the classroom. For the "Under The Sea" unit that was done in June, Jane played a CD with ocean sounds that helped create an atmosphere conducive to the month's theme. The students could imagine themselves working or playing by the seashore as they heard the waves crashing and the sound of the gulls.

Classroom Management

Jane used music as a tool to facilitate classroom management. She would start the kindergarten class by singing "Come and Join Our Circle". This song helped with roll call and signalled to the stragglers or latecomers that they were expected to quickly join the rest of the class. This first song assisted both the teacher and the students to bring focus and cohesiveness to the class, and in effect, facilitated the general management of the class. During the singing of the "Weather Song" and the "Alphabet Song", the students became active participants as they coordinated the use of their voices and hands in sounds and rhythms. By adding clapping to the singing, the students become engaged

and more focussed during their learning experiences. The teacher has strategically planned the singing of action songs throughout the circle time period in order to sustain the children's attention. At the end of circle time, the teacher has the students stand and march to "Merry, Merry Day" in order to re-energize some students and help release the restlessness in others. At the end of centre time, Jane plays an instrumental guitar piece on a C.D. Player. This piece not only determines the time that the children have to clean up but also helps the students focus on their task as they are encouraged to be listening to the music while quietly tidying up. The music not only motivates the children to finish tidying up their centre before the song is done, it also accelerates this process for some students. When the students are sitting on the rug and listening to this instrumental piece, it presents an opportunity for the students to come together, refocus and calm down. The instrumental piece plays an important role in preparing the students for one last communal activity referred to as *closing circle*.

Routine

It is my experience that students in kindergarten thrive on routine and like a sense of predictability for daily events. In this kindergarten site, there are five core songs that are interwoven into the daily schedule and thus are part of the routine. The students expect to sing these same five songs everyday. The songs have enabled them to know their parts and respond on cue. For example, at the end of circle time, without the teacher even saying a word, I observed the students stand up, and wait for the teacher to play the "Merry Merry Day" song. The students predicted when the song was to be played as it signaled for them the end of circle time and the beginning of centre time. The students

were also aware that some songs were not part of the routine and would change along with the monthly themes.

Handclapping

The students' handclapping was one predominant element in this kindergarten site. The students handclapped for many of the songs and were encouraged to create a handclap when they were the Dynamite Kid. By incorporating handclapping to songs and poems, another dimension was added to their learning experience – the benefits of team work in a common project while also increasing the use of their senses. As Newman (1998) reminds us "everything that gets into the brain enters through the senses [and] because of this, it is important that children use their ears, eyes and hands so that the brain learns to be receptive" (p. 23). For example, the song "Merry Merry Day" helped the students develop their gross motor skills. The students were taught to march to the pulse of the song as well as handclap with a partner. This required coordination and proved to be challenging for some students. The students also learned new ways to move with their hands. Every day a different student was chosen to be the Dynamite Kid and was given the opportunity to lead the class into a rhythm handclap as accompaniment for the weather song. The Dynamite Kid's rhythm clap could often be very challenging. One day, Aiden, a student with special needs created a complicated handclap that was quite challenging for some students in the room although it seemed to be easy for him. He had the class performing a clapping action that consisted of alternately clapping the one hand palm followed by the fist to the other hand that remained in constant palm. The ease at which he could do this surprised me. Many of the children in the classroom could

not do it and became quickly frustrated while those who could do it, were proud of their accomplishment. This is just an example at how students were exposed to different ways of clapping, which would lead to the learning of new hand movements or of new ways to clap. For Aiden, it was a boost to his self-esteem as his peers were impressed with his creative handclap and with the ease at which he could perform it. As Brown and Brown (1997) explain participating in music activities, " helps build self-esteem and create a sense of inclusion" (p. 351). For Aiden, this moment gave him a sense of belonging to the group, while giving him an opportunity of contributing to the group.

The handclap activity offered the opportunity for children to innovate and to demonstrate their creative skills. Some students seemed to look forward to teaching their peers their creative handclap. Others preferred to stay with the regular rhythm clap that they had originally been taught by alternating a handclap with the tapping of the lap. The teacher had provided space for her students to explore and create an individual handclap. It was up to them to choose how far they were going to take this opportunity – they were in control.

This handclapping activity also enhanced leadership skills in students. As the Dynamite Kid led the class with his or her very own handclap, this gave him or her ownership of the activity. It also built confidence and risk taking in children, since standing up in front of the class can be an unnerving experience for many children. It is evident that the teacher has provided a safe and caring environment in which the students could take risks and be in control.

Peer negotiation was also developed during the "Merry Merry Day" song. Students learned how to cope when a friend had already been paired up with someone

else. This was also a good time for students to learn how to be more forthcoming and approach other students to be their partner. Students also learned how to cope with having to choose a partner when two students had approached them.

Rhythms of the Classrooms

Jane not only used music to create a mood in the classroom she also had organized most of the songs to help the children with their energy level. The ebb and flow of the rhythm of the classroom, the up-times and the down-times, were evident. Students need a variety of high and low energy times throughout the day to be effective learners in the classroom and Jane had managed to organize her songs in an effective manner conducive to the children's energy levels. The weather song using hand clapping helped to energize the children during circle time. While they were sitting, they were encouraged to become active participants by singing and clapping their hands. By becoming more involved this helped the students to focus. The "Merry Merry Day" song really increased the class's energy level as they were invited to march to the music and handclap with other students in the class. This was done at the end of opening circle after the students had been sitting for a while. This activity re-energized the students and segued them into centres.

Some music was used to lower the energy level in children. The "Quiet Song" played on the CD player at the end of centers, helped the students calm down before beginning closing circle. Students were expected to tidy up quietly while listening to the instrumental guitar piece. Once they finished tidying up they were encouraged to take a moment, sit quietly with their eyes closed and listen to the instrumental piece until it was

finished.

During the "Under the Sea" unit in June, Jane would play a CD with ocean sounds while the students were engaged in their activities at the various centres. This evoked a sense of calm and quiet in the room. The cries of the gulls over the constant sounds of the waves crashing on the shore seemed to lull the children in the class who were quieter than usual during their learning centres as they wanted to hear and listen to these sounds.

At the end of the day, the teacher usually increased the students' energy level. For example, during the month of June they would usually end their day by singing and dancing to the song entitled "The Beach". This song was one of the students' favourite and it was always performed with great joy, liveliness and enthusiasm. This final daily activity provided an opportunity for the students to celebrate another day of learning together before parting.

Music and its Influence on Students

In this situation it was apparent that music affected the students differently. When the instrumental music, intended to calm and settle students, was being played, the majority of students were eager to please their teacher and tried to follow her instructions to the best of their abilities. However, for Conrad settling down proved too difficult and when the instrumental piece was being played, he responded by moving and dancing to the music. As he danced you could see him blossom before your eyes. That was his moment, the one that spoke the most to him. Conrad showed me that everyone experiences school in their own unique way and our favourite times in class are usually the most memorable for us.

A Caring Environment

Caring relationships between the teacher and her students as well as amongst the students themselves is evident in this kindergarten site. "Come and Join Our Circle" is the first song that this class sings together as a group. In this song, all of the children's names are sung which presents an opportunity for both students and teacher to acknowledge all who are in attendance in the class. This song is used to introduce the adults who are in the room and it is also a way of making them feel welcome. Students learn who their peers' parents are as well as how to address them. Since each student certainly feels special when it is their turn for their name to be sung by the their classmates, singing this song promotes a sense of belonging for individual students and makes everyone feel welcome and part of the classroom community.

The practice of designating a Dynamite Kid to assist the teacher and lead the class through the various circle activities promotes the development of leadership skills and builds confidence and a sense of self-worth in the student. It is evident that the students feel comfortable enough to take risks in front of their peers. Jane has provided for her students a positive classroom environment where students are nurtured to allow for growth and development to occur.

The Merry Merry Day song promotes interaction amongst the students and provides an opportunity for students to do an activity with a student that you would not normally choose. Singing as a group helps create a bond and brings members closer together. Singing together toward a common goal whether it be to make students feel accepted as part of a group or to welcome outsiders enhances the sense of caring in a

group. On a daily basis, the kindergarten students would joyfully sing together at the end of the day before parting. This was a ritual extolling the process of learning together.

Music and Theorists

In my view, this kindergarten class is focused very much towards a Vygotskian orientation. Singing also transformed learning into a social event. During opening and closing circles students seemed to be encouraged to support each other. The Dynamite Kid was on stand-by to help any of the classmates who had difficulty finding a letter during the "letter-looking" activity. The literacy song sung on a daily basis, allowed students to slowly build or construct their knowledge. In accordance with Vygotsky's constructivist theory, this song was used as a tool to scaffold the children's learning during their zone of proximal development when students are in the process of "coming to know". During activities at the various centers, the students went beyond independent discovery as the teacher and the other adults in the room worked with small groups of children scaffolding their learning. When the Dynamite Kid taught a new creative way to handclap to other students, this demonstrated scaffolding as the relationship between the knower and the one who is coming to know was evident.

As indicated earlier, Bresler (1995) identified four ways in which music could be integrated into a classroom: subservient, co-equal, affective and social. In this site, Jane has used music in a subservient manner by integrating songs throughout the day. She used music as a tool to help enhance and enrich the teaching and learning process in literacy and other areas. From a kindergarten perspective, the use of music enabled the

learning process to be enjoyable for the students which in turn enhanced their participation and interest. Jane also used music in a social style as her students came together, celebrated and bonded through song that in turn contributed to the building of a caring community of learners. Jane also used music in an affective manner when she played the ocean sounds while the students attended their learning centers during the "Under The Sea" unit. The music transformed the atmosphere in the classroom resulting in a mood being created while affecting the students' experience in the classroom.

Summary

Jane's kindergarten program benefits from a very favourable organization situation. The class size is small and very well supported by adults. Although her classroom is small in terms of space, she has effectively organized it in a manner that gives the students adequate space for small group centres and whole group activities. While the majority of instruction occurred through various educational centres, the opening and closure of the class was achieved through whole group activities. Jane's program is designed to support and encourage child choice and child initiated activity. In this site, literacy was at the core of the program and singing was used to enhance the teaching and learning of the children's literacy skills. By daily singing about letters and their sounds while handclapping the students became active learners. In this site, students also had the opportunity to practice their leadership skills and develop their creativity. Jane began each afternoon with a greeting song to personally acknowledge each student in her class and make them feel welcome. In this process, all the students were also given an opportunity to acknowledge each other. Songs, chants rhymes and

poems integrated into the kindergarten program developed the whole child, as these activities often required the simultaneous use of many senses. When students sang, they used their body, mind, and even soul. Students knew the routines of the day and the use of various songs throughout the day enhanced this process. Songs helped students segue from one activity to the next. Since some songs were used to increase students' energy while others were used to calm the students, Jane affected the rhythm of the classroom to optimize her students' learning experiences. It was evident in this site how music positively affected the students with special needs. It was during some of these moments that they were able to shine, and really feel part of the group. Jane also used recorded music to create and enhance a desired mood in the classroom. Recorded music was also used to help students focus on tidying up at the end of centres as well as calm them down. In this site the subservient, the affective and the social styles of integrating music were evident. All in all, music contributed to a positive classroom atmosphere, to joyful learning and a sense of belonging.

CHAPTER FIVE

Interpretation of Findings

This study describes different ways in which music has been integrated into two kindergarten programs and the effect music had on the daily experiences of both teachers and students. Faced with the same Program of Study, both teachers in this study created a space and environment conducive to the creation of a caring community of learners for their students in kindergarten. By incorporating music in their daily activities, the students' daily learning experiences were enriched. Each kindergarten site was as unique as the children who formed them and as was each teacher's interpretation of the document. The teachers' background, past experiences, personal teaching styles and personal creativity, all influenced the interpretation and the delivery of the prescribed program. From this study, it is evident that in early childhood programs, means are as important as matter. In both sites, teachers were conscious of how important it is to make kindergarten a positive experience for all students, for it is the inception of their learning journey. The path that each teacher creates and paves for their students will have a profound affect on them so students must find this path positive, interesting, enticing and inviting for them to stay on it and thus become life long learners. How well the path is built is just as important as the destination itself.

In the process of building this path teachers play many roles. As I reviewed this work, I have come to appreciate the analogy between teaching practice and musical performance. In the successful implementation of a program of studies, the classroom teacher mirrors the musician in his/her musical journey from the selection of a musical score to its final performance. During this journey, the teacher passes through four

stages. In the first stage, teachers are like interpreters as they read through the program of studies and try to find meaning. Next teachers become composers as they develop a program from which the students will learn. Following this, the teacher becomes a performer through the act of teaching. With experience the teacher can also become an improviser through which both teacher and students become involved in a dance with the common goal of better understanding what is happening in a particular moment. The teachers in this study showed how deftly and successfully this could be accomplished.

TEACHER AS INTERPRETER

No two musicians interpret a piece in the same manner. The same can be said for teachers and the way in which they teach. While faced with the same teaching content, the teaching strategies selected by an individual teacher, and how these strategies are used, is a unique personal process. The interpretation process occurs prior to actual classroom instruction. As an observer, I was seeing the results of each teacher's interpretation of the kindergarten program of studies. I was seeing each individual teacher's creative means of interpreting content in a manner appropriate for her audience, the students in her class at this particular time.

This study shows how, when faced with the exact same program of studies, kindergarten programs each classroom will have a unique character and look entirely different. Every class will be unique. In this study, both teachers' background, creativity and experience all affected the way they interpreted the document and how it came to life every day for their students.

TEACHER AS COMPOSER

Creating Space: The Physical Environment In The Classroom

According to Ellis (2004a) places very much influences the quality of life that children will have and it is important that teachers transform their classroom into a place that will evoke place attachment for children. She further explains that "successful places" are accessible to young children, are welcoming in appearance offering lots of places to sit, where there is a chance of meeting other people you know thus promoting socialization. These elements could be seen in both sites.

Both classrooms were visually appealing. The classrooms were cheery, brightly coloured with displays of students' work. The kinds of experiences that the children had were influenced not only by the way the room was arranged, but also by the schedule, and the types of activities at each site. The kindergarten rooms in both sites were set up in a manner that would best suit the kind of learning experiences that the teacher wanted to provide. In both classes shelves and furniture delineated various spaces that determined what kind of activity was going to take place. Some of the sections offered small square footage to promote small group activities while the larger areas provided space for large group or whole group activities or instruction. The use of high shelves also contributed to the creation of enclosed, private space for students who wished to interact in smaller groups. It is interesting to note how children chose to use the various spaces in the classroom differed among the children as each child interpreted the use of the space differently. The various spaces allowed the teachers to create learning centers that offered the children a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

Bulletin boards were dedicated to showcasing children's work and celebrating

their progress and their accomplishments. The process of displaying the students' work probably encouraged them to take ownership of their classroom and make it their own, thus promoting a sense of belonging. As Gandini (1993) explains, the display of students' work and projects record events in the children's lives and as well, their contribution to the space makes them aware that what they have done is valued. When teachers create a room that is aesthetically pleasing, it can influence the classroom atmosphere making it an appealing and inviting place to be. As Ellis (2004b) states, "place is understood to be a source of security, comfort, stability, nurturance, belonging, meaning and identity" (p.84). She further explains that places that support creative play among children not only facilitate social affiliation and identity, but also contribute to the development of culture that is rooted in place.

It is important that a lot of thought and care is put into the physical set up of the room for it can have an impact on, and can contribute to, the students' perception of well-being, sense of security and belongingness. It was evident in both classrooms that the teachers were well aware of the influence that the physical environment could have upon their kindergarten children.

Creating Mood: Atmosphere In The Classroom

Everyday life in the classroom includes routines, rituals, and the gathering of the same group of people for a whole year. Ellis (2004a) further defines everyday life in the classroom to include interactions. "It is through our actions in everyday life that we build, maintain, and reconstruct the commonsense ideas, values, roles, and motivations that shape our actions" (Ellis, 2004a, p. 27). Human relations can be at times complicated, and sometimes even stressful. Imagine how difficult it must be for young

children who may be egocentric, impulsive, vulnerable, and even uncertain, to come together with other unfamiliar children to a new place that we call kindergarten. It is the teacher's first task to reassure each child, reduce their anxiety, and let them know that their needs and point of view will be recognized and valued. In order for this to happen, teachers must put a lot of thought into, not only the physical set up of their room, but also in the creation of classroom atmosphere. As Ellis (2004a) observes, students will only develop a healthy attachment to a place if and when they feel secure.

Music played a critical role in developing and sustaining the atmosphere in both of the classrooms in the study. Both teachers purposely selected songs or musical activities to create specific moods that enhanced and enriched the classroom ambience. Songs made the environment inviting and the students felt welcomed as well as accepted by their peers. Singing contributed to the creation of a joyful classroom atmosphere.

Creating Rhythm: Routine In The Classroom

For children to flourish, their environment must be a place in which they feel comfortable and happy where they have a sense of belonging. It is through classroom routines, instructional practices, special events and school programs that students can experience a sense of collegiality with peers, explains Ellis (2004a). Both teachers in the study have established routines in their classrooms to help students feel more secure.

Events that occur on a daily basis become part of what is known as ceremony. According to Peterson (1992), "ceremonies aid students in making the transition between daily life and classroom living by turning thoughts toward schooling [and] create an intellectual and emotional order for the schooling activity so that the group is focused

upon learning and community life" (p. 16-17). Ceremonies can occur throughout the day and are an effective tool to organize one's day. It can occur throughout the day. As Peterson (1992) notes, an opening ceremony can include ritual, such as singing a good-morning song or teaching the calendar. Ceremony can also be used as a transitional tool between activities throughout the day as it can "provide time and a suitable climate for students to come to grips with the forthcoming activity" (p. 19). In both sites, songs helped students learn and follow the daily schedule. The songs also signalled the end of an activity and prepared the students for the next activity.

Creating Expression: The Role Of Sensitivity In The Classroom

The use of the word pedagogy in the original Greek sense, to mean leading children, reflects the important role a teacher plays in the classroom. "Teaching is truly pedagogic if the leading grows out of this care that inevitably is filled with the good of care. Teaching, then, is a tactful leading that knows and follows the pedagogic good in a caring situation" (Aoki, 2004, p.191). Aoki reminds us that teaching is about much more than just transmitting knowledge. It is also about a teacher's ethic of care and being sensitive to his/her students as well as to everyday life in the classroom. As Aoki (2004) further explains, teaching should be

> understood not only as a mode of doing but also as a mode of being-with-others. Teaching is relating with students in concrete situations guided by the pedagogical good. Teaching is a tactful leading out – leading out into a world of possibilities, while at the same time being mindful of the students' finiteness as mortal beings (pp. 361-362).

Caring implies relationships according to (Bosworth 1995, Chaskin and Raumer 1995). It is a response to basic psychological and social needs. Noddings (1995) recognizes caring as a fundamental aspect of teaching. She explains that

> teachers can be very special people in the lives of children, and it should be legitimate for them to spend time developing relations of trust, talking with students about problems that are central to their lives, and guiding them toward greater sensitivity and competence across all the domains of care (p. 679).

According to Noblit, Rogers and McCadden. (1995) it is important to have good social skills, a feeling of self-worth, nurturance and support and strong academic and cognitive activities, in order for anyone to reach their full potential. They further explain that caring does not guarantee mastery of skills or achievement in children, but creates possibilities for new academic and social development while enhancing teacher/student connection.

In this study, it was evident that both kindergarten teachers related well to their students. Facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice, when students and teacher interacted, demonstrated a genuine caring relationship. Recognition of individual students through song increased the children's sense of acceptance and belonging. Songs in the classroom also allowed the students to move from an egocentric viewpoint to nurturing interest in others in the classroom. While acceptance by peers for the students with special needs was not consistently demonstrated throughout the day, acceptance was evident during musical activities.

TEACHER AS PERFORMER

The Art Of Playing

When I began my research my initial concept of play included what children did at recess, what they did in centres as well as what they did during a teacher-led game. It was months later as I was analysing my data that I realized that play was much more than that. It came in many other forms – some, more subtle than others. Means are as important as matter in early childhood programs. "Effective teachers of young children become skilful observers and co-players, not mere implementers of standardized curricula" (Jones, 2003, p. 35). By cultivating the disposition to play, teachers not only provide children with important sources of artistic experience, they also provide a climate that welcomes exploration and risk-taking. Teachers need to play with teaching materials (resources) and brainstorm curriculum possibilities in order to become more creative in the manner in which they present concepts. In playful teaching, teachers engage students in activities where students' focus is on the process or performance of the activities rather than on the ultimate goal or result. Teacher as playmate during playful teaching allows teachers to scaffold information and concepts in order to further develop the children's knowledge base. As children participate in the performance of the activity they are unwittingly working towards achieving the ultimate goal.

There was evidence of playful teaching in both sites. It was through the use of poems, chants and music that playful teaching occurred. During these times, both teachers showed an increased amount of energy and a sense of commitment, as they became the children's playmate. This combination of play and teaching is a powerful teaching tool. This teaching practice requires a teacher who has a strong sense of self in

order to experience a certain sense of vulnerability inherent in becoming the children's playmate while maintaining the role of teacher. During playful teaching, the children's faces displayed smiles and the level of noise increased as they sang or recited the poem or chant. I also heard inflexion in the children's voices, giggles and even laughter. In the room the level of energy increased as everyone moved through the actions or movements. A sense of excitement and joy was evident.

Playing A Duet

Teaching is about being engaged with what is happening in the classroom at any given time. Aoki (2004) suggests that engagement requires that theory be integrated into practice.

> Rather than seeing theory as leading into practice, we need now more than ever to see it as a reflective moment in praxis. In action-oriented language, praxis is action done reflectively, and reflection on what is being done. Within this view, knowing arises not from inward speculation but from intentional engagement with, and experience of, lived reality (p. 120).

The study supported this viewpoint. In both sites, teachers and students continuously reacted to and interacted with what was happening in the classroom. Comments and questions, the manner in which the students were engaged, all influenced the way the class unfolded. Teachers and students both became co-creators as they shaped the reality of classroom experience.

Students learn by doing, by interacting with their environment as well as by interacting with others in the classroom all within the context of the classroom. As

Eisner (2002) observed, "experience is central to growth because experience is the medium of education" (p. 2). What the students experience on a daily basis impacts each student in a unique way. Our past experiences or our horizons, influences how we interpret what is happening before us.

According to Eisner (1994) "experience is a necessary condition for knowing, and because the character of experience is dependent upon the qualities to which it is directed, the quality of experience will depend upon what our senses have access to and upon how well we are able to use them" (p. 29). The predisposition to one or more of the senses will directly influence perception. Hence, there is the need for a variety of sensory experiences in the kindergarten classroom. For example, students' engagement was enhanced by the action songs used by the teachers in my study. Learning and making meaning progressed as the actions often reinforced meaning of the words or lyrics being sung.

Our experience as individuals is not only influenced by the environment that we are in but by the contributions of others around us. As Eisner (2002) explains, "we develop, in part, by responding to the contributions of others, and in turn we provide others with material to which they respond." (p.7). As Ellis (2004b) further explains that "our experiences are circumscribed by our places and our personalities and perspectives are developed from the experiences we have in the places available to us" (p. 83). Since teachers are products of their own experiences, the differences in background, and establishment of routines, rites and rituals of the two teachers in this study, influenced the types of experiences in each of the two classrooms. Aoki (2004) suggests that context certainly influences how the program will be implemented. The context of the classroom

and the norms that pervade have an impact on the lived experiences of the students in the classroom. For example, the difference in class size between the two classes impacted on curriculum delivery and consequently there was an increase in whole group instruction in the larger class.

The kind of experiences that the students have in the classroom is very much influenced by the teacher's choices of activities, how and what will be taught. This choice can be influenced by the teacher's background and according to Bredekamp and Copple (1997), as educators, it is important to acknowledge that we are all influenced by our cultural experiences. A teacher's individual past experiences can greatly influence the way daily lessons are planned. As McNeil (2003) states,

> the planning of an instructional unit offers the teacher an opportunity to initiate a curriculum that is responsive to a local situation, individual students, and the teacher's own passion. Unlike curricula presented in textbooks that isolate knowledge into subject matter compartments, a teacher's unit plan may forge connections among subject matters, as well as connect to life in a particular community. (p.190)

Therefore the context of the classroom, the children, and the past experiences of the teacher are all elements that come into play in the challenge of bringing the curriculum to life.

The classroom experience must be equally inviting to students with special needs. Music played an important role in enriching the experiences of these students. They were more engaged in the learning process when music played a part of that learning. Music also afforded these students the opportunity for equal participation in activities and, in

some cases, the opportunity to out-perform the other students. The students with special needs were not necessarily at a disadvantage during musical activities. Music played an important role in developing self-esteem for these students.

In some ways both teachers had come full circle. I observed that the experiences that each teacher provided for her students were reflective of her own past experience. Although each kindergarten site that I observed was as different as the children that formed them, Lorraine taught in a rural farming community, similar to her own elementary education experiences. This in turn provided her with a deeper insight into her students' lives than a teacher that had grown up in a highly populated urban area might have had. Jane was raised near the school in which she taught, a predominantly white middle class suburb therefore, she was also very familiar with that particular community culture. One aspect of their programs that suggested this ongoing connection to perceived community culture was shown in the reliance upon culturally traditional songs in both sites. Since I myself come from a French background, this traditional kindergarten repertoire was unfamiliar to me, which indicates the English culture specificity of these musical choices. Although these are traditional in English culture they are not universal. While a multilingual song was used at one site, the unintended bias that was embedded in the choices of songs in both classrooms was evident.

TEACHER AS IMPROVISER

Making Music Come To Life

Teachers are like jazz musicians; the art of improvisation is as key to successful teaching as it is for a jazz musician. Teachers are continually deciding on how best to

respond to whatever is happening in the classroom. At any given moment, activities or dialogue can move in an unexpected direction. Both students and teachers are co-creators of the realities and experiences as they unfold before them. Improvisation is symbiotic in nature and for it to be successful, each party must be willing to make a contribution, while at the same time be willing to let this contribution evolve or go into a completely different direction. It is important for teachers to be able to exploit opportunities as they occur and to accept that goals and intentions will be fluid. As Lobman (2003) notes, spontaneity is a key element of improvisation. She further explains, that when teachers engage in improvisational activities, the classroom environment is conducive to supporting and developing children's creativity. In turn, this environment also supports and develops the teacher's creativity.

Viewing teaching as an act of improvisation reflects more accurately the realities of the classroom. This is why, when it comes to the process of curriculum delivery, Aoki (2004) suggests that instead of curriculum implementation one should see it as curriculum improvisation. "In curriculum improvisation teachers are asked to shift from being installers to being improvisers, sensitive to the ongoing life and experiences of themselves and students in the situation" (Aoki, 2004, p. 370). In other words, it is important for teachers to take advantage of unanticipated openings for creative intervention to the planned trajectory of the lesson. During this sequence of events the teacher depends on his/her practical and professional qualities and according to Johansson and Kroksmark (2004) this can be defined as teacher intuition-in-action. Intuition means "not only seeing with the eye but also with the intellect, that is to perceive, to understand" (Johansson and Kroksmark, 2004, p. 358). They further state

that the "teachers' backgrounds explain and answer why they intuitively act as they do" (Johansson and Kroksmark, 2004, p. 364). Teaching experience is considered to be a kind of knowledge that also contributes to their intuitive acts. The teachers in this study were very knowledgeable in their field as well as very comfortable teaching at the kindergarten level. They were always ready to share knowledge, songs and poems when the opportunity presented itself. It was this ability to respond to an unplanned need of the students that allowed the teachers to address the immediate learning needs of the students.

Tacit Knowledge

According to Polanyi (1966) tacit knowledge is "a way to know more than we can tell" (p. 18). In other words, tacit knowledge is one's personal knowledge, unique to us all, that is difficult to verbalize. It is also associated with our intuition explain Kikoski and Kikoski (2004). They further explain that tacit knowledge includes our "automatic" or "out-of-consciousness" actions. It also encompasses a person's "background of past experiences, unarticulated assumptions, and unconscious thoughts, as well as the inferences drawn from them" (Kikoski and Kikoski, 2004, p.66). Clearly it was evident that Jane and Lorraine relied on this knowledge for much of their daily decision-making and their reactions to what unfolded before them.

A teacher's frame of mind is also a contributing factor during the experience of intuition-in-action. According to (Johansson & Kroksmark (2004), frame of mind "expresses itself as the teacher's own signals to his surroundings, to the class; most of all, however, it expresses itself as a capacity to understand the signals from the students and

the surroundings" (p. 366). During my observations it was evident how both teachers were constantly aware of the students' energy level, their ability to focus on the task at hand, and their level of engagement during the activity and both teachers made accommodations whenever possible.

According to Johansson and Kroksmark (2004) "approach is characterized by our ambition and therefore connected to our own will. A certain amount of courage is also required in order to be able to follow what the situation has to offer in a flexible way" (p. 368). This process is overcome by "consciously directing their attitude towards the students' reactions and allowing themselves to feel these signals." (p. 368). As mentioned earlier, Norlander-Case, Reagan, and Case (1999) identified this practice as reflection-in-action where teachers make decisions and judgements in midst of practice. In my study, the attunement of both teachers to their students was evident. During my observation, both teachers were constantly aware, and sensitive to, the drama that unfolded before them. Both teachers were willing to follow what the situation had to offer in an open and flexible way rather than rigidly follow their lesson plans. This in turn allowed them to take advantage of teachable moments as well as surrender to the immediate needs of their students. The lived-curriculum was indeed alive and well.

As Aoki (2004) observes, for the curriculum to come alive, the curriculum has to contain a reciprocal invitation where teachers and students are invited to enter the curriculum and where students and teachers invite the curriculum into the classroom. It is only "when the curriculum, teachers, and students click, we are likely to find a live tension that will allow the teacher and the students to say, "We live curriculum'" (Aoki, 2004, p. 362). The use of music in both sites contributed to engagement with the lived-

curriculum. The choice of songs or musical activities often depended on the teachers' perception of the students' needs and feelings. It was evident that there was a very sensitive, responsive fit amongst curriculum, teachers and students.

I have had a wonderful opportunity to observe the various roles that these teachers in both sites, played throughout the day. I realized how similar the teachers' journeys are to that of musicians as they interpret the curriculum, compose their program, perform during class time and must be able to improvise as the need arises. Musicians need a good foundation in music and good playing skills before they can start improvising and teachers must also be well grounded in theory and practice before they can improvise. I observed how teachers draw from tacit knowledge and with experience, develop an attunement to students and the classroom situation that enables them to react appropriately at any given moment. It is through these reactions and interactions amongst teacher and students and between the students themselves that the curriculum becomes alive. Music was present throughout the day as songs enriched the programs that the teachers had composed. Music added an element of playfulness to the daily performance of that program. For the students, music helped address their needs and enhanced their classroom experiences while engaging them in a journey of a lived-curriculum.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary and Implications of the Finding

Through the descriptions and interpretations of the study, I have attempted to capture the various roles that music, most particularly in this study, singing, chanting, and rhyming can play in kindergarten and its contribution on the every day life in the classroom when it is interwoven throughout the kindergarten day.

Case study method is particularly valuable in educational research as it can directly influence curricula development, teaching practice, pre-service education, in-service education, and future research. The purpose of this study was to understand how and why kindergarten teachers use music, more specifically singing in their classroom, its contribution to the life experiences within the classroom, as well as how its integrative use contributes to the quality of the kindergarten program. The context of the teaching situation engendered different pedagogical approaches and practices distinct for each teacher but also distinct within the individual teacher's experiences. Despite these different approaches and the unique circumstances of each teacher's context, there were commonalities in the teachers' practice that were clearly evident.

Although there has been no intentional search for commonalities with this study, some have surfaced, nonetheless. In reviewing this work, the analogy between teaching practice and musical performance became evident as a means of framing the similarities I observed. Similar to the musician's journey to the final performance, the teacher's journey from interpreting a program of studies to the creative delivery of concepts is just as complex. Four major themes were identified: **Teacher As Interpreter, Teacher As composer, Teacher As Performer,** and **Teacher As Improviser**. These themes were

significant aspects of both teachers' pedagogical practices and approaches to kindergarten level educational processes.

As **Interpreters,** each teacher's interpretation of the program of studies was as unique as the kindergarten site and the children who formed them. However, both Lorraine and Jane had a vision that they followed, and this vision complemented their understanding of how children learn. This in turn brought the curriculum to life in their classrooms particularly when both teachers used music to enhance the vision they had for their respective programs. As well, given the context particular to each classroom, the teachers' unique use of music complemented their kindergarten program.

Both teachers believed in the importance of making kindergarten a positive experience for all students. As **Composers** in their classroom, they are both committed to fostering students' enjoyment and positive feelings about their first year of their schooling journey. They believed in building a community of learners by encouraging a caring, welcoming and tolerant environment in their classroom. Both encouraged their students to have a sense of ownership of their classroom by proudly displaying their students' art projects on the wall, and both teachers put a lot of thought into the physical environment of their room.

In both situations, music was a significant factor in the general classroom atmosphere. The use of songs contributed to the enhancement of classroom routine that in turn enabled the students to better understand and proceed through the daily schedule. Singing together created peer bonding that consequently enhanced children's sense of belonging. Songs were used to celebrate milestones and rituals that recognized particular achievements and developmental thresholds.

Learning opportunities in both sites were rooted in educational and playful activities that promoted student motivation, curiosity and attention. Both had a clear understanding of the rhythms of a day and planned their daily schedules accordingly. The use of songs enabled them to better control the ebb and flow of energy in the class.

As **performers,** Lorraine and Jane are gifted in their ability to relate to children and they nurtured a relationship with their students that promoted an atmosphere based on mutual respect that encouraged on-task behaviour and a sense of belonging. Both believed in bringing out the best in their students. Playful teaching and joyful learning were evident in both sites. Both teachers provided socially stimulating settings that embraced the importance of purposeful daily social interactions between children and adults as well as between student peers. They both demonstrated that integration of learning into playful, real-life experiences provides a relevant context in which young children can more readily understand and internalize new concepts. They also used music in helping students connect new learning to familiar routines, prior experiences, previous understandings in order to scaffold the children in the learning process. Both Lorraine and Jane felt comfortable singing with the children and were at ease performing action songs.

As **Improvisers**, Lorraine and Jane were attuned to their students and their needs during class time and reacted accordingly. Reflection-in-action was evident as they made decisions and reacted in midst of practice. Both teachers were open and flexible to the events that occurred before them and were not afraid of following a different path than intended during the daily educational journey. As well, they both took advantage of teachable moments that presented themselves which always made learning even more

interesting for all involved.

Summary

When teachers bring music into the classroom, the diversity of rich experiences will vary in each classroom. Music brings a new dimension to the teaching and learning processes into the already multi-layered classroom environment. When music is an element in classroom practices it affects this multi-layered entity since students, classroom atmosphere, context are all influenced by the use of music in many different ways. It is through the teacher's attunement to her students and what is happening in the class that the impact of music emerges. Equally, the inclusion of songs, chants and rhymes enhance lessons and teaching methods. The use of creative teaching methods not only provides an opportunity to improve students' daily experience and may engage a wider range of students but also may provide an opportunity to entice, motivate and encourage students to do their best. This resulted in the kindergarten programs being more developmentally appropriate.

Through this account it was evident how curriculum comes to life through a teacher's unique vision of the interpretation of the program of studies and its delivery. As well, a teacher's attunement to his/her students, the students' interaction between themselves and the teacher, and the events that unfold in the classroom all contribute to this process. Although both teachers' personalities, horizons, teaching styles and context of the classroom were different, identifying these was not intended to suggest that one site is considered to be superior to another. There is more than one right way to teach. Both teachers demonstrated different pedagogical approaches and practices that worked

well in their particular setting.

As mentioned earlier, this study is situated within a context in which teachers pursued a form of integrated music experience in a kindergarten program. While the benefits of music integration are evident thru this study, it must also be noted that a limitation of an integrated approach towards music instruction may not achieve all of the music curricular objectives as would a specialist approach.

Implications for Teaching Practice

The findings have implications for practice for educators. Firstly, the findings have implications for early childhood educators, for whom the descriptions and interpretations of the role of music in kindergarten might prompt reflection, inquiry and discussion as to the nature of their own practice. Teaching and learning are constantly developing and evolving within the lived experience of the classroom. Teachers need more educational interactions and collegial conversations about teaching and learning in kindergarten not only to validate this evolution but also to challenge and extend their thinking to new levels of understanding and knowledge. This detailed account of classroom practice may also provide insights for any teacher who is interested in making music a more significant aspect of his/her program. Perhaps this study will encourage teachers to develop a variety of strategies and approaches using music that meet the diverse needs of all students while acknowledging and promoting that there is more than one right way to teach.

Knowledgeable teachers connect what they know about their students as learners to what they know about curricula, developmental theory, and pedagogical strategies to

facilitate and improve their daily instruction. This study might help teachers see the various ways that singing, chanting and rhyming can be used in the process of curriculum delivery, and, as well, its contribution to the quality of the kindergarten program and the everyday life experience in the classroom. School principals may be influenced in their hiring practice offering positions to individuals who are more musically inclined. Principals might also realize the value of supporting individuals who do already have a rich musical component in their program and may encourage professional development in this area.

At the post secondary level, this interpretive inquiry may provide an opportunity for those involved in the pre-service education of teachers, to use these descriptions and interpretation as a bridge between theory and practice. Areas to further develop and focus during pre-service education programs might include teachers' attunement to students, the rhythms of a classroom, as well as reflective pedagogical practice. For those involved in professional development and teacher education, this may elucidate ways to provide opportunities to enhance teaching practices using music in early childhood educational settings.

The inclusion of music is an excellent teaching strategy to use to enhance the classroom experiences of each and every child. Moreover, music plays a very important role for students with special needs who are being integrated more and more into regular classes. Students with special needs can benefit from music being used as a teaching strategy as it may enhance not only the learning process but also improve the quality of classroom experiences for these children. There is value in structuring and orienting these students to the social routines of the classroom and music can ease and enrich this

process.

Examining the kinds of experiences that children are getting in places such as kindergarten, can be of great value. More inquiry into the child's sense of place and the concept of space may provide valuable insight into the impact of these two facets of the kindergarten classroom.

Group singing can ameliorate the classroom atmosphere contributing to the building of a caring community of learners where students feel supported not only by adults but also by their peers. Life in the classroom is multi-layered and music adds a new dimension to this entity. Many songs in kindergarten are part of daily routines and rituals that enhance the atmosphere and increase the students' sense of security and of belonging. This sense of security and of belonging is crucial to all primary classrooms. This account might encourage more teachers to use music not only in kindergarten but also in the primary classes.

Implications for Further Research

This study described two teachers who integrated music into their kindergarten program. These teachers recognized the important role music plays in learning and felt confident and comfortable that music occupies an important place in their kindergarten classrooms. There are many kindergarten teachers who do not have the conviction or confidence of these two teachers, and consequently singing plays a minor role in student learning in their classrooms. In this study, it became apparent that singing, chanting and rhyming did indeed enhance the learning process. How can we help those teachers who do not have the musical expertise, or are skeptical as to the benefits, integrate music into

their classrooms?

I believe that all kindergarten teachers could embrace and incorporate music into their programs through collaboration with fellow kindergarten teachers who are more musically inclined or collaboration with music educators. Given the constraints of after school professional development sessions and the limitations of one-hour workshops during professional development days as previously discussed, perhaps a different model needs to be considered in order to provide kindergarten teachers with this opportunity. If this challenge was taken up, the question then arises as to what format would successfully provide the development of collaborative peer support, and how long and to what extent such collaboration would need to continue so that kindergarten teachers readily used music throughout the day to enhance teaching, learning and life experiences in the classroom?

Developing a sense of community is something that kindergarten teachers are doing extremely well, and this supportive environment is one that could be equally valuable in the music classroom. This account described how music and singing contributed to the environment and sense of belonging in the kindergarten classroom. How would it be possible to achieve this in an elementary music and what would music specialists have to do to achieve this? How would their music pedagogical practices need to evolve in order to make this possible? I think that such a reconceptualization of the music classroom would promote greater focus on musical expression and creativity, leading to more balance between skill development and expression. Also, teachers would be more accepting of student collaboration and student initiative.

As well, a limitation that was evident in this study was the inability to reach the non-verbal students. Methods need to be developed by which less verbal students would be able to provide an input regarding their opinions on the matter being studied. Perhaps having the more verbal students assist me with these children could be a strategy.

Reflection on the Research

When I began my research, I wanted to better understand how and why the generalist used music in the kindergarten setting and how the integrative use of music contributed to the quality of that program. I chose to do a descriptive and interpretive case study because I wanted to explore in a holistic manner the various ways that music could be incorporated into a kindergarten program and how its integrative use affected the quality of the kindergarten program as well as the everyday lived experience for both teacher and students. My own stance as an educator and researcher was ever present in the conceptualization of this study, in the research design and methodology as well as in the descriptive and interpretive accounts.

As a kindergarten/music teacher, and now as a researcher, I have been privileged to observe two kindergarten teachers who have honed their craft. My observations of their teaching performances increased my appreciation of their skills and talents as well as further developed my sense that the art of teaching is very complex. It consists of multiple layers of what the teacher knows and does amid a group of students in the context of a classroom. It is evident that both teachers in my study are well grounded in both theory and practice and this enables them to adjust their practice to make things work in the best way possible in their own teaching situation.

The research was personally affirming, as I saw in each teacher's practice and ways of thinking and doing that resonated with my own experience as a teacher. Moreover, it extended my own learning about teacher knowledge and practice in kindergarten. Jane's passion for literacy, and Lorraine's energy and enthusiasm to make children's learning joyful affirmed the characteristics that I can bring to my work as an educator. As well, this experience has made me realize the importance of having elementary school administrators well grounded in early childhood education for the decisions that they make in regards to kindergarten classes in their schools can have a great impact on the quality of the program and even influence the kindergarten teacher's pedagogical practices. It is hoped that this dissertation enlightens administrators and advance their thinking from a modernist perspective where linear, sequenced and measured progress holds great importance, to a postmodernism perspective where the quality of the children's learning journey is valued as an essential aspect of achievement.

The findings from this study strengthened my resolve to continue to support and advocate the importance of integrating music in a kindergarten program. I value particularly the contribution of the kindergarten children. This study included children's thoughts on songs and music activities that happen throughout the day in kindergarten. As teachers and as researchers, we must be willing to listen to our younger students. It is important that they be given a voice. As Cook-Sather (2002) explains "authorizing student perspectives means ensuring that there are legitimate and valued spaces within which students can speak, re-tuning our ears so that we can hear what they say, and redirecting our actions in response to what we hear" (p.4). This study provided a "legitimate and valued space" within which students were able to share some of their

thoughts on music in kindergarten. It is hoped that more research will focus on the voice of our kindergarten students and perhaps continue to develop ways to better understand children's responses. We may not always agree with what they tell us, but there is certainly much to be learned from their thoughts.

As I continued to reflect on this dissertation, I realized that what this document had uncovered and presented also revealed to me what was absent. What was present was an integrative approach but in order for children to become knowledgeable, skillful and expressive in music, a focused program is necessary in order for all curricular goals to be achieved. Children then have a voice to express their feelings in a different and creative way. As well, it gives them an opportunity, a space to explore with sound, movement and instruments. We still have a long way to go as far as reconceptualizating how quality music education can best be provided in early childhood classrooms, since good classroom management is often associated with teacher control and conformity which are highly valued in the school system. In order for reconceptuatlization of practice to emerge, what is deemed valuable must change and teachers and administration need to imagine the rich possibility of trusting the positive impulse of children.

From a kindergarten's perspective the use of songs, chants and rhymes to support the program was developmentally appropriate. Kindergarten teachers' main goal is to ensure that their students will be above all else ready for grade one. As well, kindergarten teachers believe in the importance of ensuring that children have a great experience in their first year of school for it will strongly influence the rest of their schooling journey. In both sites, singing, chanting, reciting rhymes all contributed to achieving these two goals in a developmentally appropriate manner. Some of the songs

used in both sites have been part of kindergarten programs for many years and have been deemed appropriate for the manner in which they are used. However, from a music specialist's point of view, some of these songs although culturally and traditionally associated with early childhood programs are vocally too difficult for kindergarten children and this has made me realize that there is still much work to be done in the field of early childhood education with regards to the vocal repertoire. Resources that would include more developmentally appropriate kindergarten songs need to be created in order for innovation to occur. For successful innovation, it would be imperative that teachers have access to these resources and receive proper in-serviced opportunities. As Duffy and Roehler (1986) point out, innovation takes time. Change, always involves a certain amount of anxiety and uncertainty and it is for this reason that a substantial amount of assistance and support is required in order for implementers to increase their skill, ownership and comfort level in the use of the innovation (Guskey, 1988).

As a researcher, I have tried to document the unique and different practice of each teacher with the hope that my description and interpretation of their thoughts and actions can affirm, inform and inspire other educators in early childhood education. I hope that those who read this study will experience a resonance with the descriptive and interpretive account, as well as feel a sense of affirmation for the work that they are doing in early childhood settings. I hope that the findings from this study will inform and inspire other teachers to incorporate more music in their program, as the significance of this study will be found in its power to change practice as we strive for quality kindergarten programs designed to promote and enhance the learning of every child.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE LETTER TO TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

Dear _____,
(Teacher's name)

My name is Monique Boyer-Wells and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta. I am writing you to invite you to participate in my research.

The purpose of my research is to seek insight into the role of music in kindergarten. Prior research in this area has addressed the value of music integration and brain development as well as music and literacy improvement. However, the idea of how music is used and experienced in the kindergarten room still needs to be examined more deeply. I wonder how music affects student engagement.

In my study I will be observing and engaging in conversations with three kindergarten teachers. I am inviting you to be one of the participants. My plan is to conduct semi-structured interviews with each participant in order to collect data about his or her perceptions and experiences when music is being used in the classroom. Teacher interviews will last about an hour while kindergarten students will last between twenty to thirty minutes. All interviews will be audiotaped so that a verbatim transcript can be made. Participants may also be asked to participate in a second short interview if additional data or clarification is necessary.

Teachers: transcripts of your interviews will be returned to you so you can verify the accuracy of them. Later I will ask you to react to the analysis of the interview records. The collected and analyzed data will then be summarized and shared with you. The data will provide a framework for the presentation of my findings. My findings if appropriate may be shared in ensuing articles and/ or presentations.

Participation in the study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice or penalty. All data collected during the study will be secured and kept confidential and then destroyed upon completion of the study. Your anonymity is assured. Your name and the name of your school or school board will not be revealed. The research will be conducted in a manner respectful to teaching and learning and as approved by the University of Alberta's Research Ethics Board, and CAPS.

As an educator who has a keen interest in the role of music in kindergarten, I think my research in this area will benefit from your insights. There are no known risks associated with this study. I think you will find this experience affirming to you as teacher. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns at 901-6926 or by e-mail at kenique@interbaun.com . I will be contacting you in about a week after you have received this letter to see if you are interested in being a participant. Thank you for considering this invitation.

Sincerely,

Monique Boyer-Wells

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORMS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Informed Consent Form (Parents)

PROJECT TITLE: The Role of Music in Kindergarten

INVESTIGATOR: Monique Boyer-Wells, B.Mus.A., M.Ed., Ed.D. (*provisional candidate*)
Faculty of Elementary Education
University of Alberta

ADVISOR: Dr. Miriam Cooley
Department of Elementary Education
University of Alberta

The purpose and methodology of this research have been explained to me. I *understand* that the information will be kept confidential and that my child's name, my child's school and school district will not be revealed. I am aware that my child will have the opportunity to review, revise, and/or accept any information he or she has provided to the researcher, including quotations, that may be included in the written presentation of the study. I am also aware that my child's participation is voluntary and that he or she has the right to withdraw from this study at any time for any reason. I am also aware that Monique will be offering my child a token from her treasure chest whether or not my child completes the interview. I understand that the information my child provides may be reported in Monique's dissertation as well as articles and presentations.

I, _____, consent to allow my child to participate in Monique's study about the role of music in kindergarten as experienced by students and teacher.

_____
(Parent's signature)

_____
(Date)

_____
(Investigator's signature)

Informed Consent Form (Students)

PROJECT TITLE: The Role of Music in Kindergarten

INVESTIGATOR: Monique Boyer-Wells, B.Mus.A., M.Ed., Ed.D. (provisional candidate)
Faculty of Elementary Education
University of Alberta

ADVISOR: Dr. Miriam Cooley
Department of Elementary Education
University of Alberta

Mrs. Wells, my mom and dad and my kindergarten teacher have all explained to me the purpose of this study. I understand that my name and that of my school and district will not be revealed. I am also aware that I will have the opportunity to review, revise and/or accept any information that I gave to Mrs. Wells including my verbal statements that may be included in the written presentation of the study. I understand that I don't have to participate in this study and I can withdraw at any time for any reason. I understand that the information that I give Mrs. Wells may be reported in articles, presentations and in her dissertation.

I, _____, accept to participate in Mrs. Wells' study about the role of music in the kindergarten classroom.

_____
(Student's signature)

_____ _____
(Investigator's signature) (Date)

Informed Consent Form (Teachers)

PROJECT TITLE: The Role of Music in Kindergarten

INVESTIGATOR: Monique Boyer-Wells, B.Mus.A., M.Ed., Ed.D. (provisional candidate)
Faculty of Elementary Education
University of Alberta

ADVISOR: Dr. Miriam Cooley
Department of Elementary Education
University of Alberta

The purpose and methodology of this research have been explained to me. I understand that the information will be kept confidential and that my name, that of the school and school district will not be revealed. I am aware that I will have the opportunity to review, revise, and/or accept any information I have provided to the researcher, including quotations, that may be included in the written presentation of the study. I am also aware that my participation is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time for any reason. I understand that the information I provided may be reported in Monique's dissertation as well as in articles and presentations.

I, _____, consent to participate in Monique's study about the role of music in kindergarten as experienced by students and teacher.

_____
(Teacher Participant's Signature)

_____
(Date)

_____
(Investigator's Signature)

APPENDIX C

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

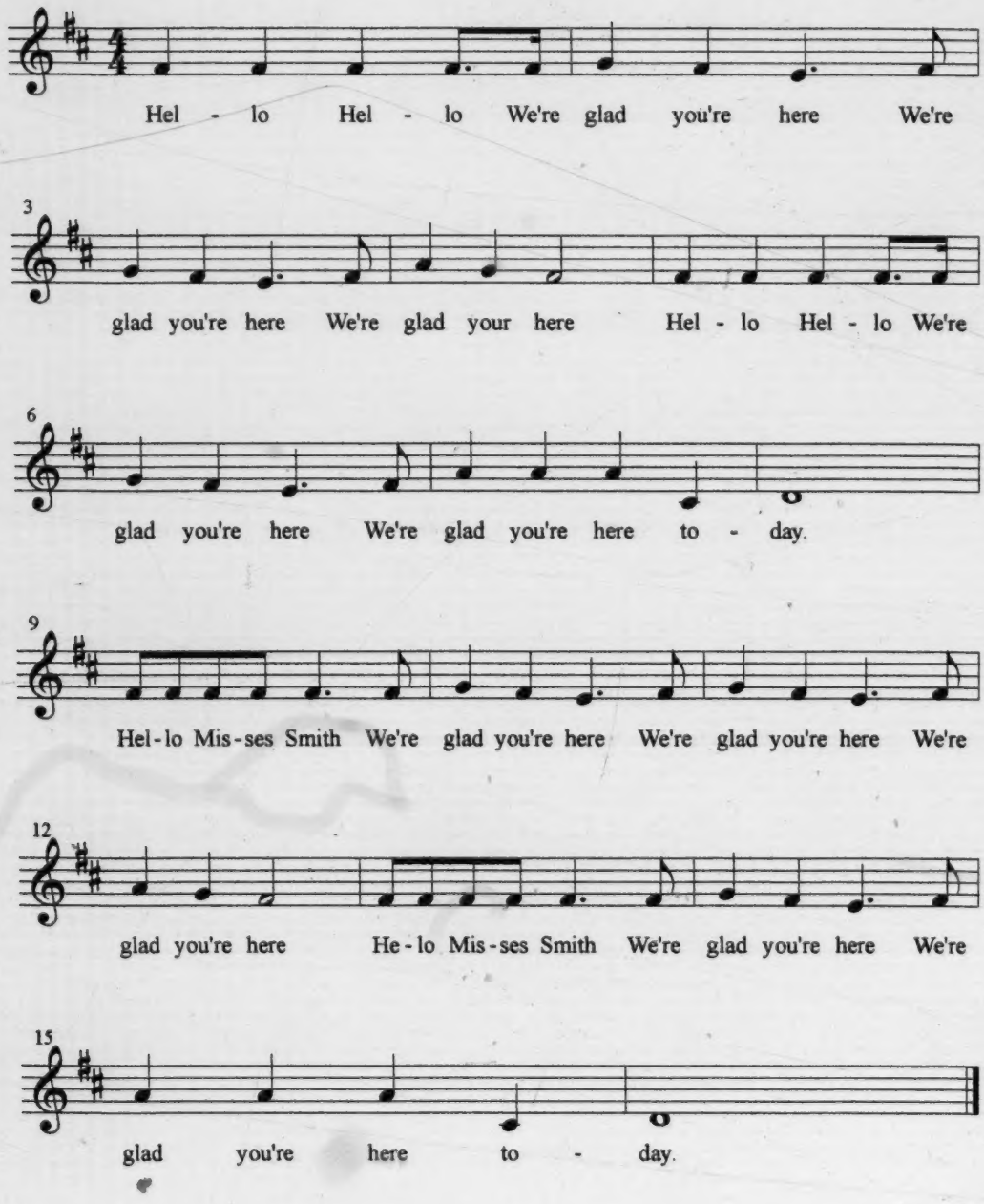
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Could you share some of your background and experience in teaching?
2. Can you tell me about a typical day of teaching in kindergarten?
3. Can you describe the pace of your day?
4. When do you feel your students are most engaged?
5. How do you promote creativity in your room?
6. How do you feel about the music goals that are set in the curriculum?
7. Can you tell me how you go about meeting these music goals?
8. Do you have some innovative ways that you've come up with to meet these goals?
9. Are their any impediments that you've encountered when trying to meet these goals?
10. What do you think your children are learning from musical experiences that you are providing. (Can you share a story or an experience?)
11. How do you feel when you are doing music?
12. Can you describe your students when they are doing music?
13. Have you attended any professional development activity related to music in kindergarten? If yes, can you tell me about that experience?

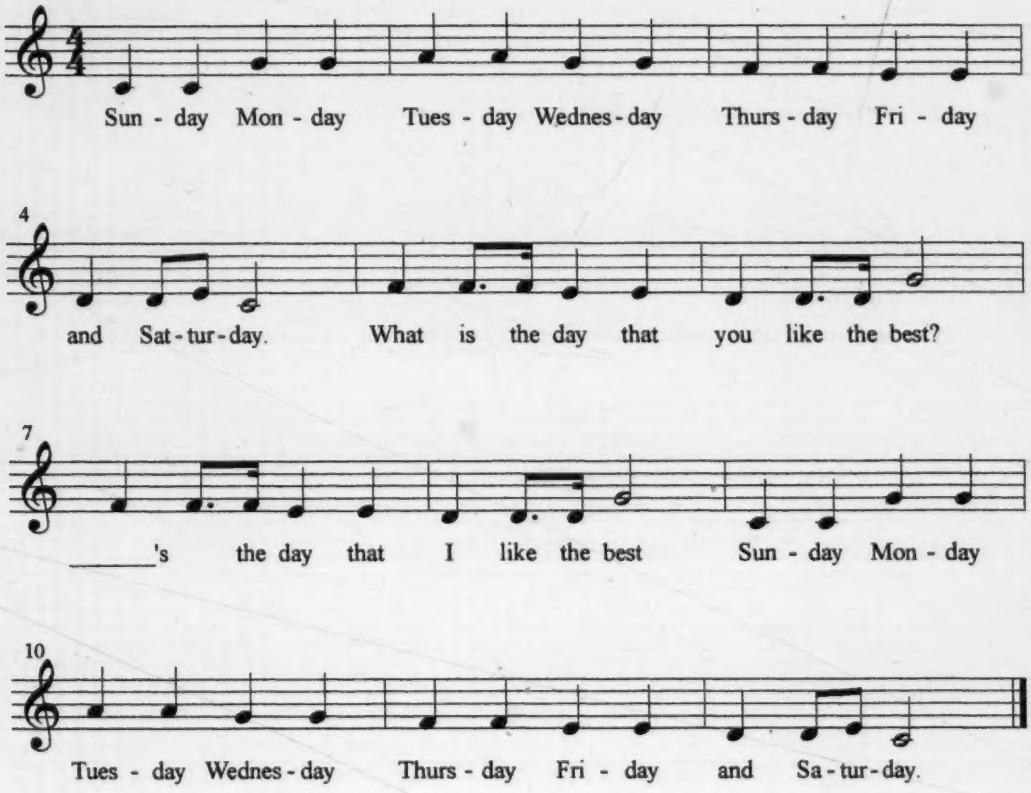
APPENDIX D

SAMPLE OF CLASSROOM SONGS FROM LORRAINE'S KINDERGARTEN

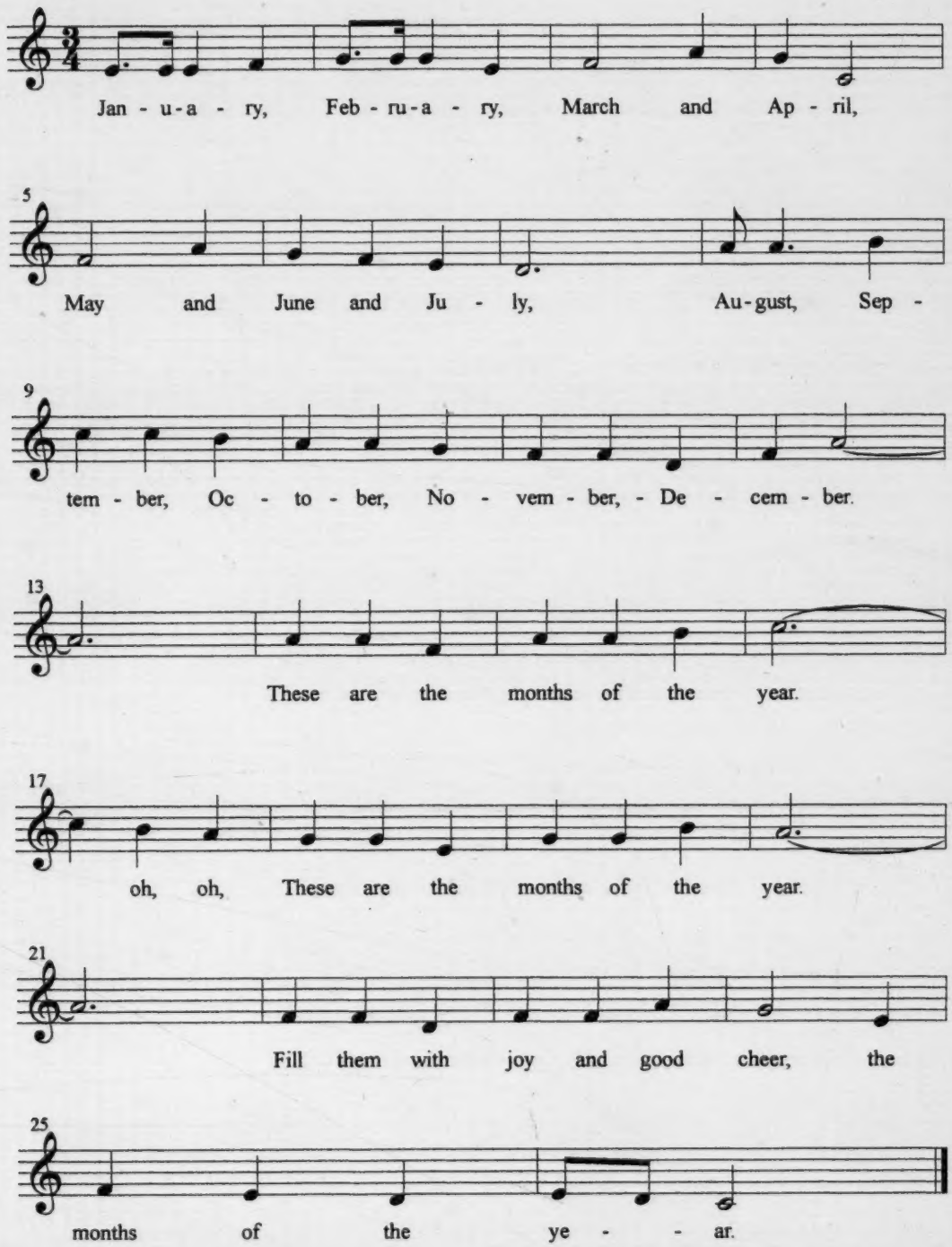
Hello

As sung by Lorraine

Hel - lo Hel - lo We're glad you're here We're
3
glad you're here We're glad your here Hel - lo Hel - lo We're
6
glad you're here We're glad you're here to - day.
9
Hel-lo Mis-ses Smith We're glad you're here We're glad you're here We're
12
glad you're here He-lo Mis-ses Smith We're glad you're here We're
15
glad you're here to - day.

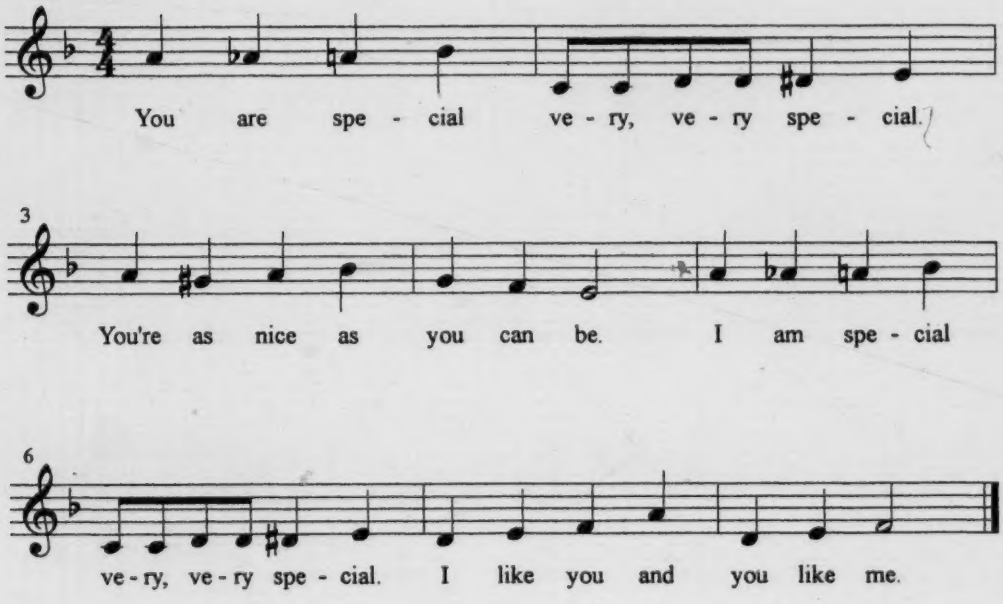
Days Of The Week

As sung by Lorraine

Sun - day Mon - day Tues - day Wednes - day Thurs - day Fri - day
4
and Sat - tur - day. What is the day that you like the best?
7
_____'s the day that I like the best Sun - day Mon - day
10
Tues - day Wednes - day Thurs - day Fri - day and Sa - tur - day.

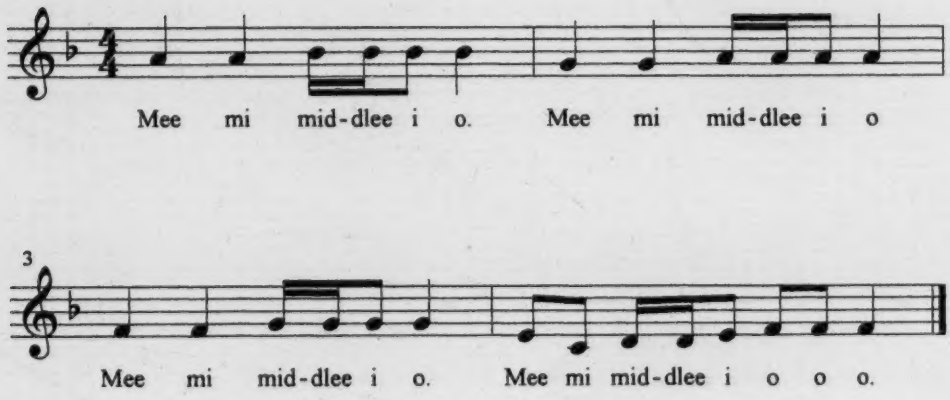
Months Of The Year

As sung by Lorraine

Jan - u - a - ry, Feb - ru - a - ry, March and Ap - ril,
5
May and June and Ju - ly, Au - gust, Sep -
9
tem - ber, Oc - to - ber, No - vem - ber, - De - cem - ber.
13
These are the months of the year.
17
oh, oh, These are the months of the year.
21
Fill them with joy and good cheer, the
25
months of the ye - - ar.

You Are Special

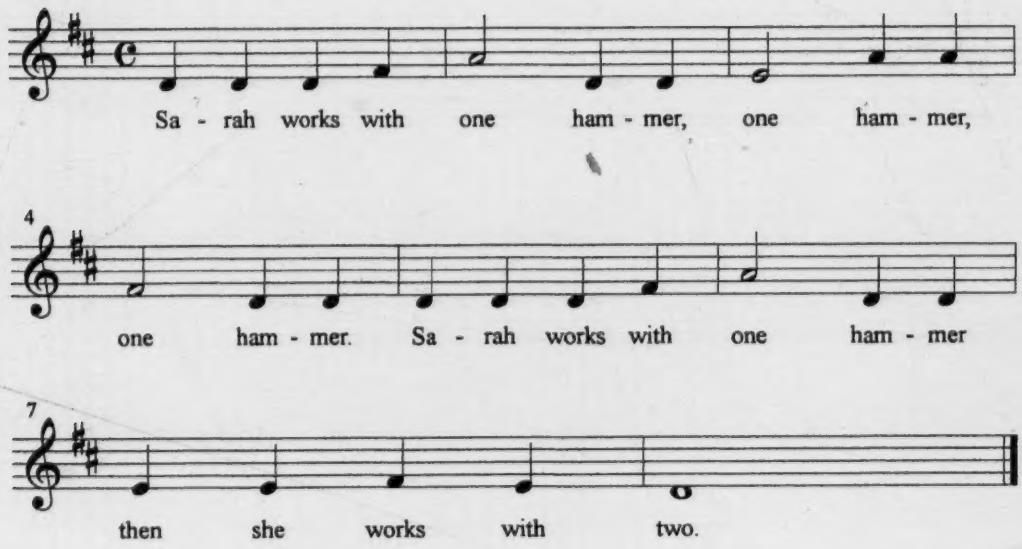
As sung by Lorraine

(_)ee (_)i (_)iddlee-i-o

As sung by Lorraine

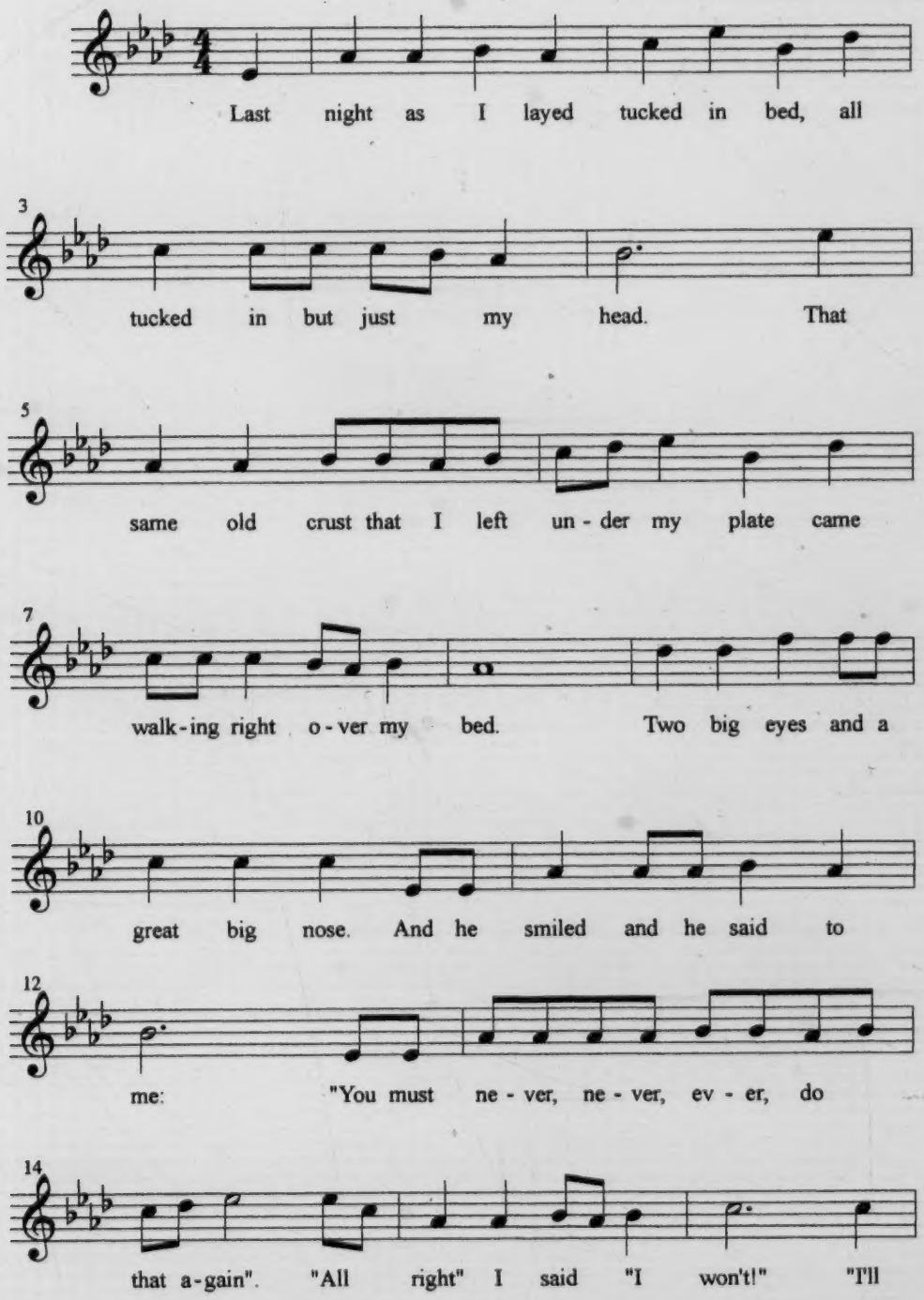
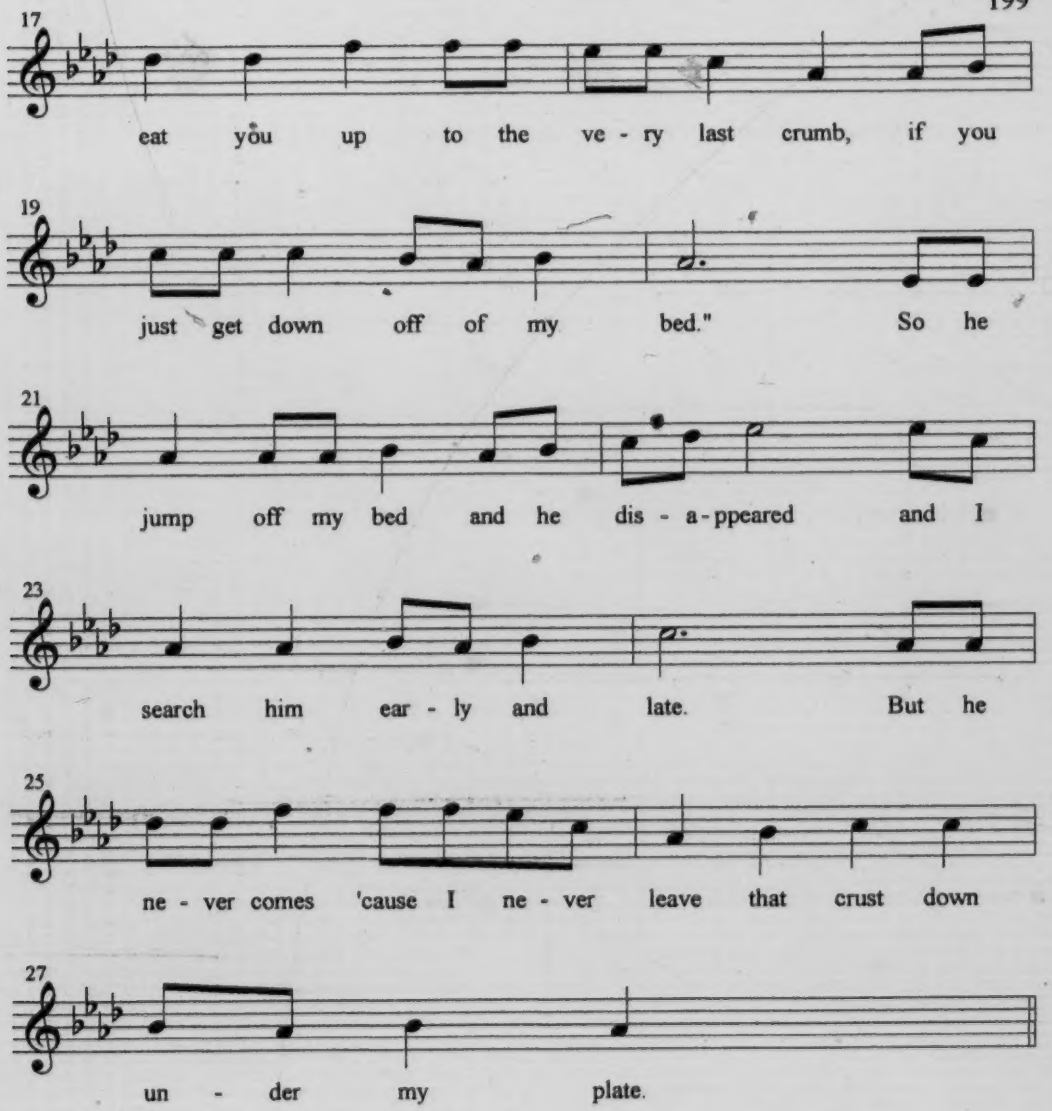


(Child's name) Hits With One Hammer

As sung by Lorraine

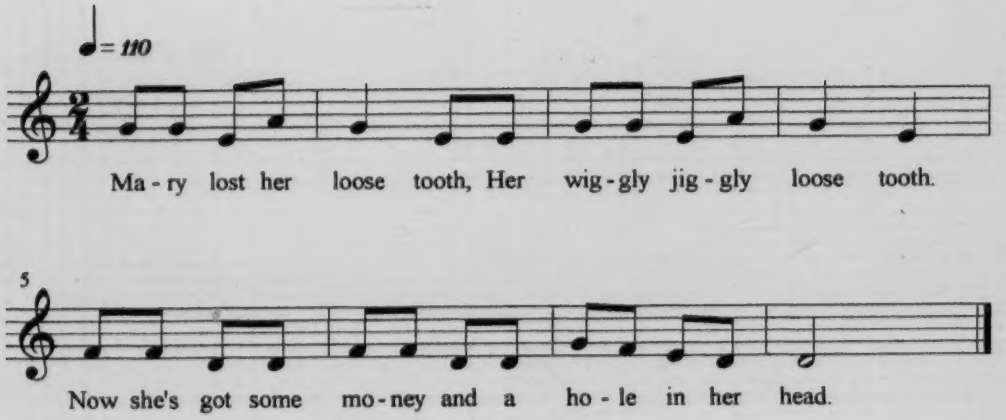


The Crust

As sung by Lorraine

Last night as I layed tucked in bed, all
3
tucked in but just my head. That
5
same old crust that I left un - der my plate came
7
walk - ing right o - ver my bed. Two big eyes and a
10
great big nose. And he smiled and he said to
12
me: "You must ne - ver, ne - ver, ev - er, do
14
that a - gain". "All right" I said "I won't!" "I'll

17
eat you up to the ve - ry last crumb, if you
19
just get down off of my bed." So he
21
jump off my bed and he dis - a - ppeared and I
23
search him ear - ly and late. But he
25
ne - ver comes 'cause I ne - ver leave that crust down
27
un - der my plate.

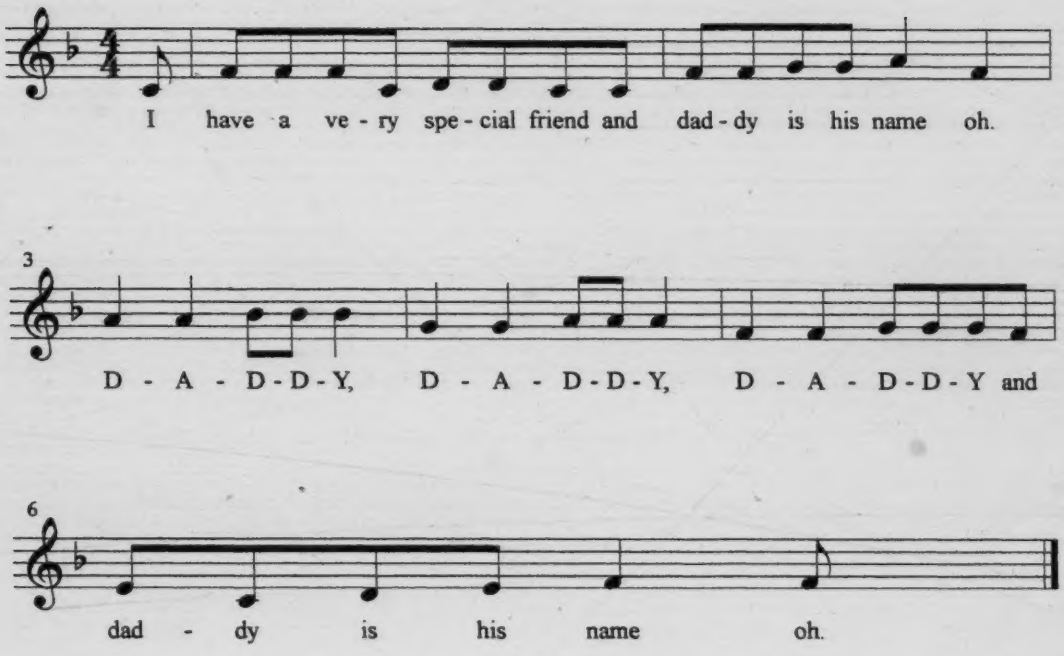
Loose Tooth

As sung by Lorraine



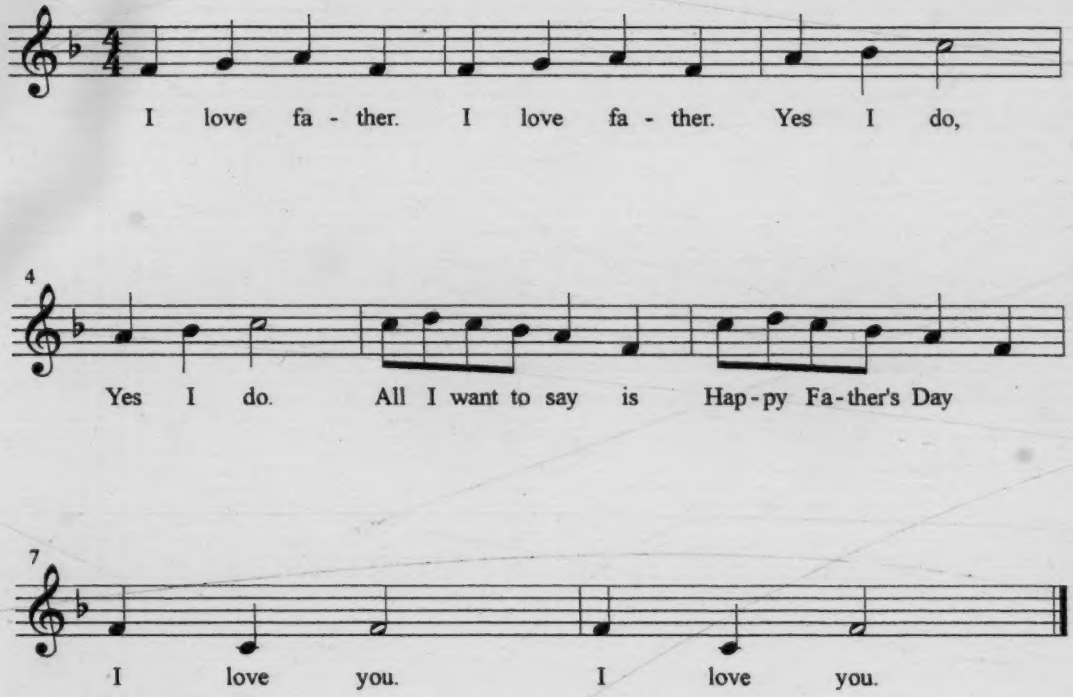
D-A-D-D-Y

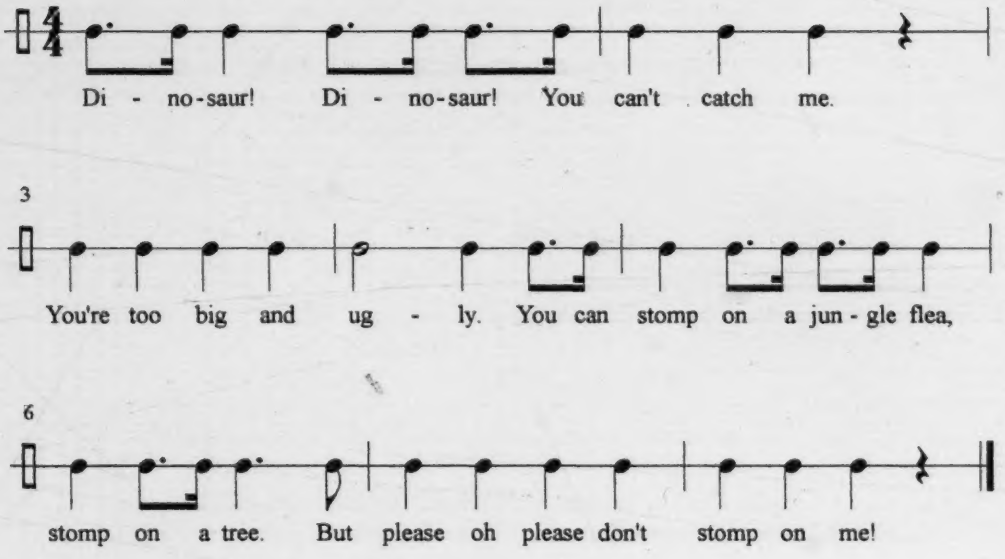
As sung by Lorraine



I Love Father

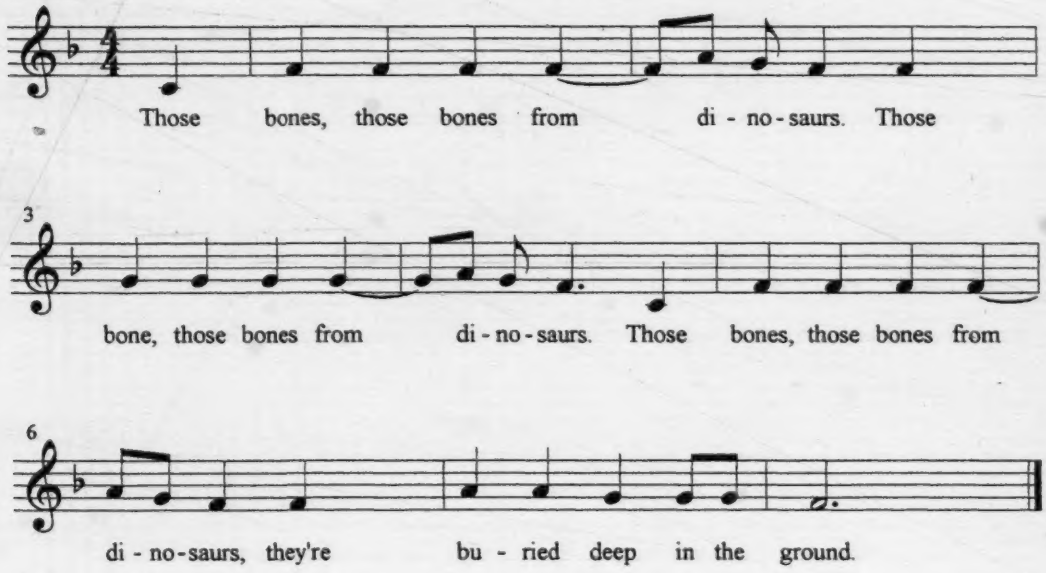
202

As sung by Lorraine

Dinosaur

As chanted by Lorraine

Di - no-saur! Di - no-saur! You can't catch me.
3
You're too big and ug - ly. You can stomp on a jun - gle flea,
6
stomp on a tree. But please oh please don't stomp on me!

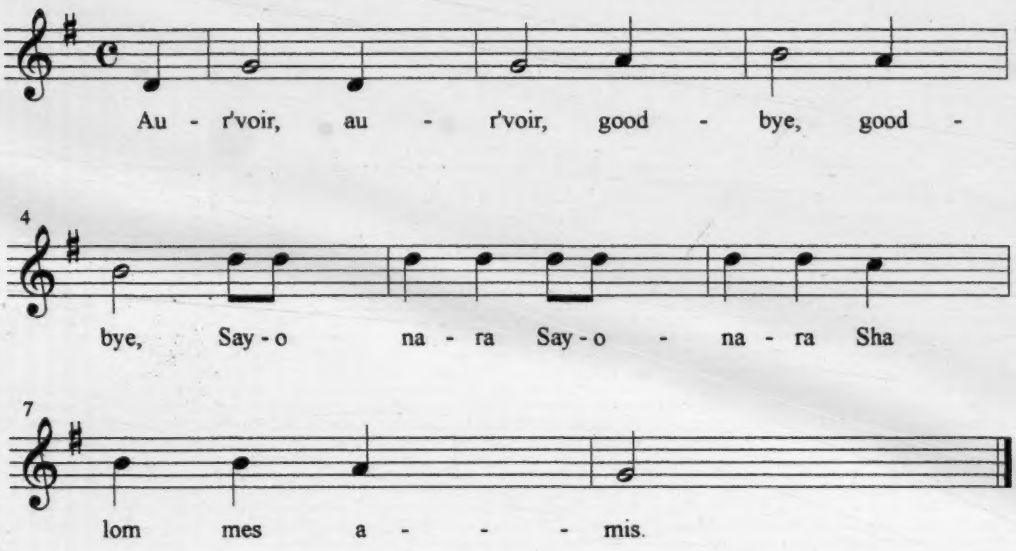
Bones

As sung by Lorraine


Those bones, those bones from di - no - saurs. Those
3
bone, those bones from di - no - saurs. Those bones, those bones from
6
di - no - saurs, they're bu - ried deep in the ground.

Goodbye

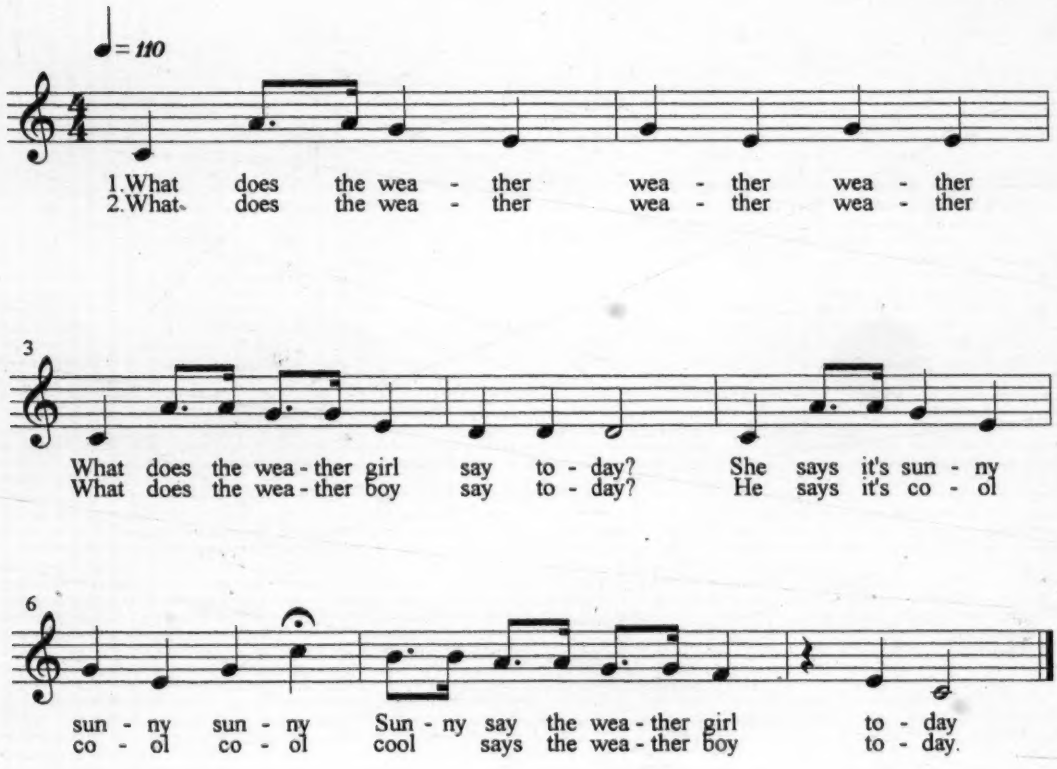
As sung by Lorraine



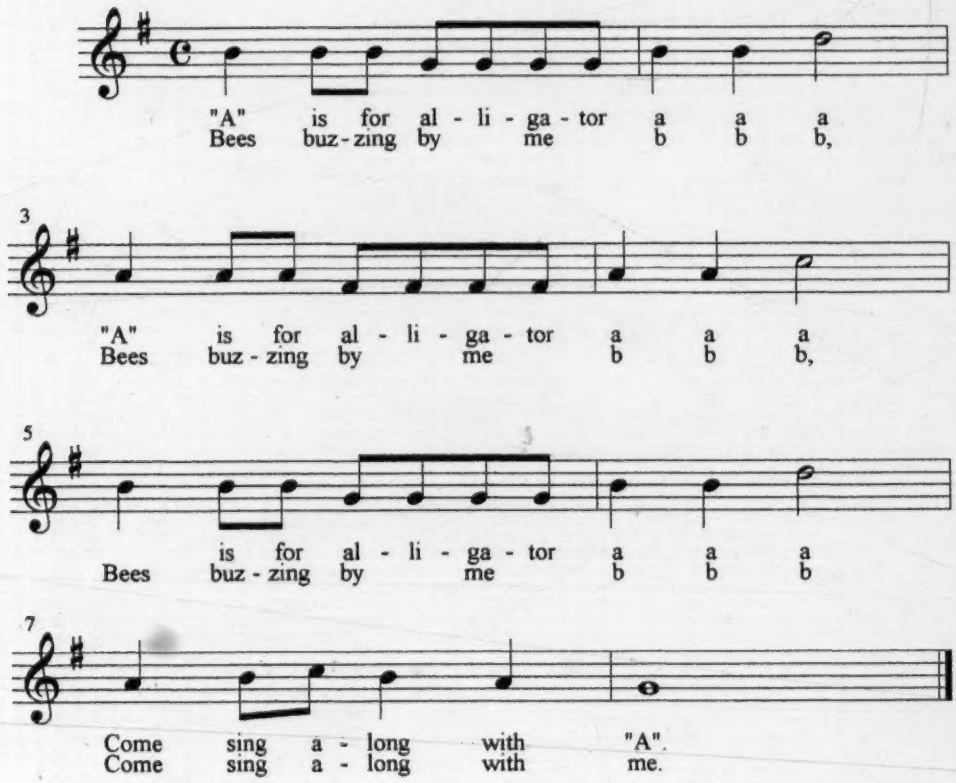
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE OF CLASSROOM SONGS FROM JANE'S KINDERGARTEN

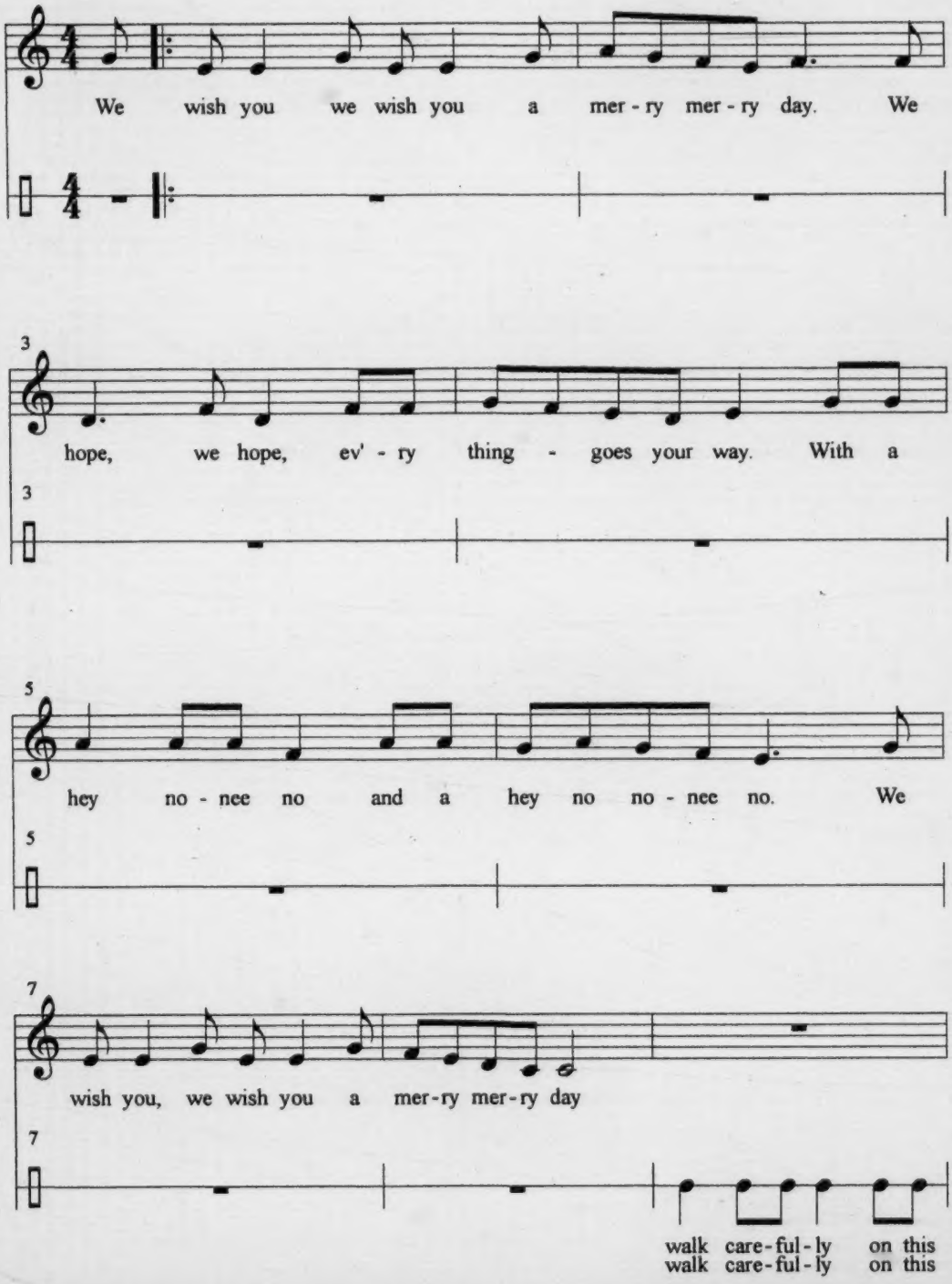
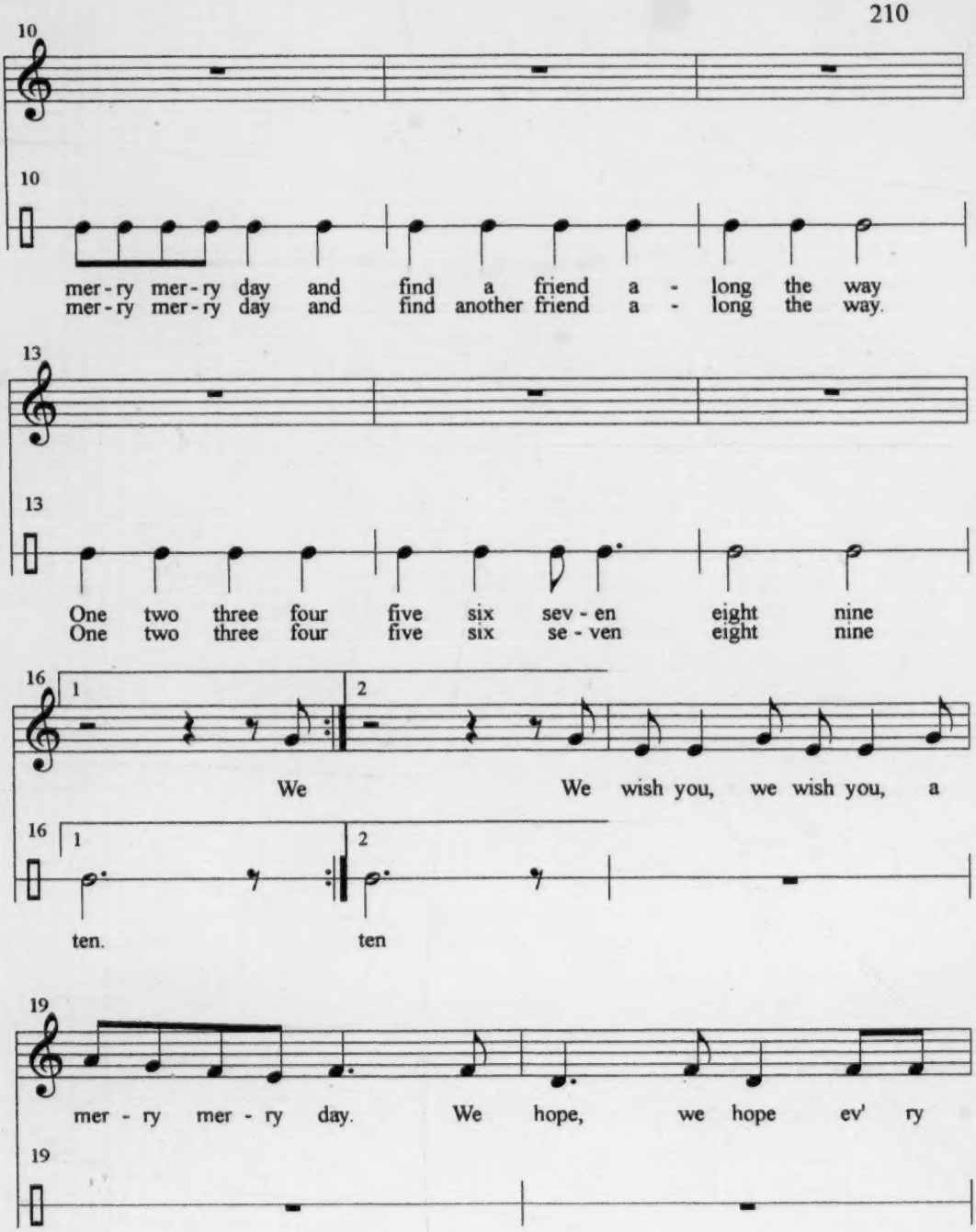
Weather Song

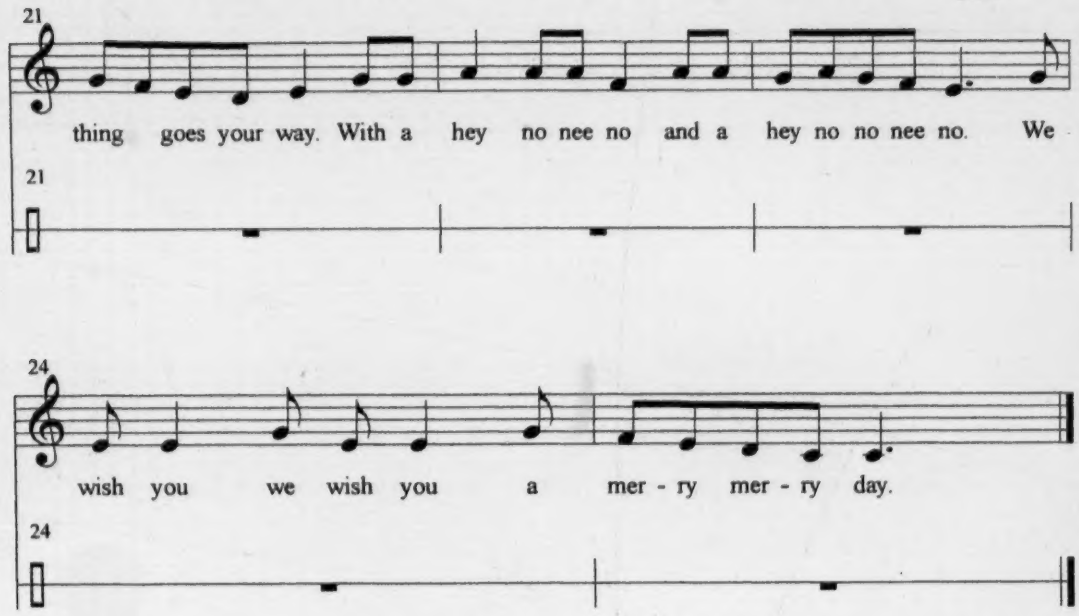
As sung by Jane

♩= 110
1.What does the wea - ther wea - ther wea - ther
2.What does the wea - ther wea - ther wea - ther
3
What does the wea - ther girl say to - day? She says it's sun - ny
What does the wea - ther boy say to - day? He says it's co - ol
6
sun - ny sun - ny Sun - ny say the wea - ther girl to - day
co - ol co - ol cool says the wea - ther boy to - day.

Alphabet Song

As sung by Jane

"A" is for al - li - ga - tor a a a
Bees buz - zing by me b b b,
3
"A" is for al - li - ga - tor a a a
Bees buz - zing by me b b b,
5
is for al - li - ga - tor a a a
Bees buz - zing by me b b b
7
Come sing a - long with "A".
Come sing a - long with me.

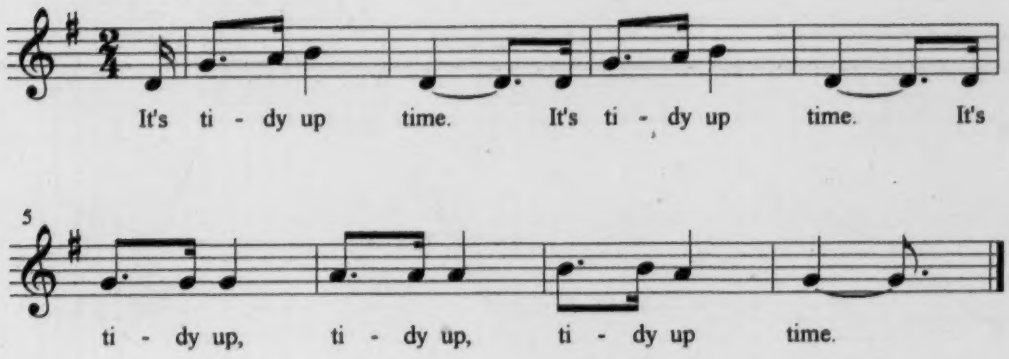
Merry, Merry Day

As sung by Jane

We wish you we wish you a mer - ry mer - ry day. We
hope, we hope, ev' - ry thing - goes your way. With a
hey no - nee no and a hey no no - nee no. We
wish you, we wish you a mer-ry mer-ry day
walk care-ful-ly on this
walk care-ful-ly on this

10
mer - ry mer - ry day and find a friend a - long the way
mer - ry mer - ry day and find another friend a - long the way.
13
One two three four five six sev - en eight nine
One two three four five six se - ven eight nine
16
1
2
We We wish you, we wish you, a
ten. ten
19
mer - ry mer - ry day. We hope, we hope ev' ry

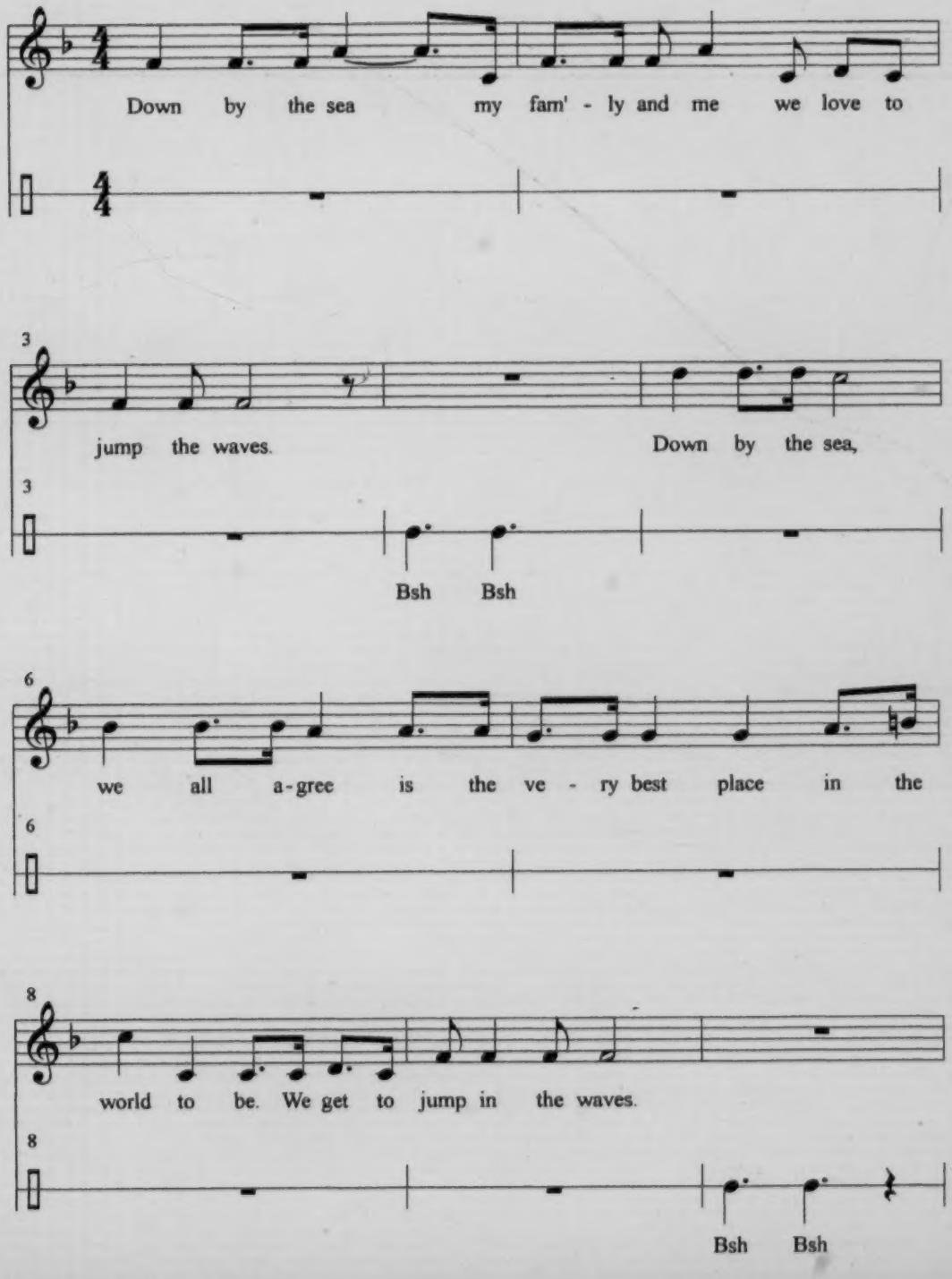

21
thing goes your way. With a hey no nee no and a hey no no nee no. We
21
24
wish you we wish you a mer - ry mer - ry day.
24

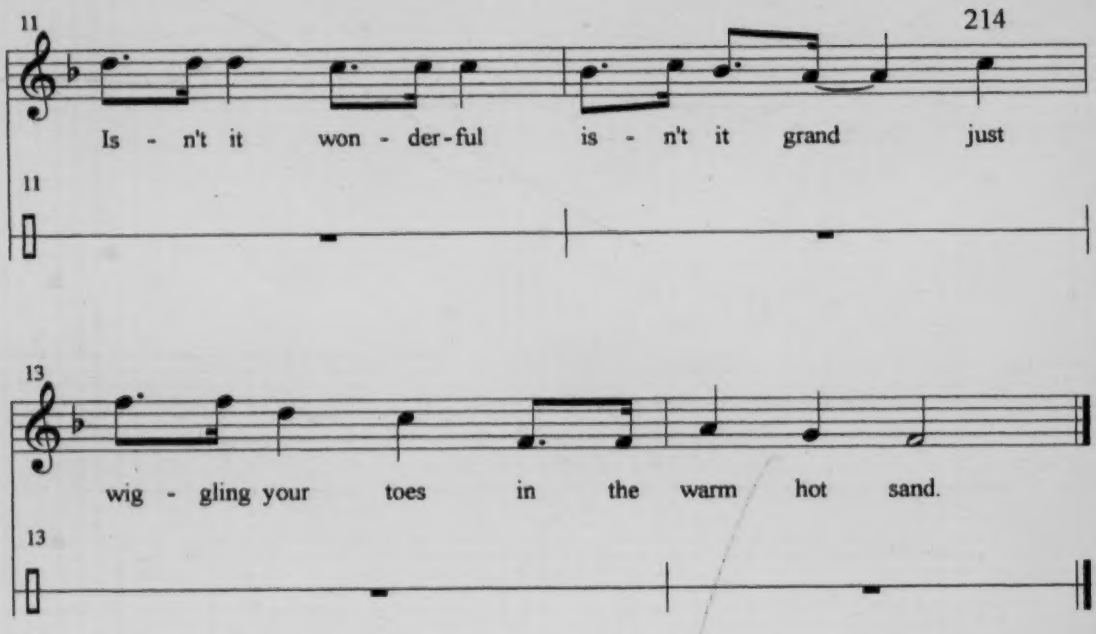
It's Tidy Up Time

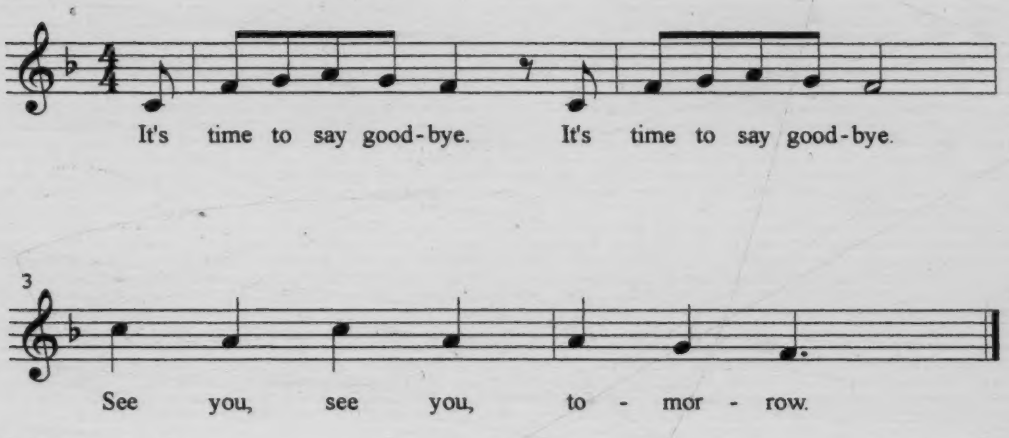
As sung by Jane



The Beach

As sung by Jane

Down by the sea my fam' - ly and me we love to
jump the waves. Down by the sea,
Bsh Bsh
we all a-gree is the ve - ry best place in the
world to be. We get to jump in the waves.
Bsh Bsh


11
Is - n't it won - der-ful is - n't it grand just
11
13
wig - gling your toes in the warm hot sand.
13

It's Time To Say Goodbye

As sung by Jane